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vol 6 issue 1

magazine

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It's Only Rock-N-Roll by Bob Toole

MP3 by CBH3

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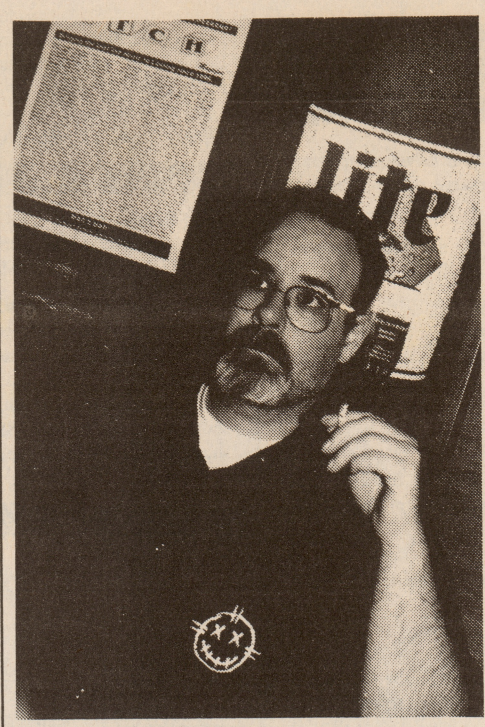

EDITOR'S RANT

Everyone reading this obviously knows there are a plethora of bands around the globe. Hands down no surprise, right? However, how many can you count on as "quality acts?" There are a couple hundred, maybe. The other night I was at a club catching some of the locals, and I was struck at how talented the opening bands were; their being youngsters and everything. Both band's talent was unsurpassed by any standard and yet each band was so-so at best. Why do bands, especially newer / younger ones, feel the need to sound like whomever tops the charts, be it *Billboard* or *MTV*. They've got their chops down pat, yet they insist on sounding like their heroes or every other band in their specific genre. Why don't they take more chances and expand that genre's envelope or, even better, create an entirely new style they can call their own? I've been in a number of bands over the years, and I won't deny wearing my influences on my sleeves. Lots of bands do. What makes me cringe at a show is hearing a band that has another's down so pat that they're merely aping them. How many more Korns or Rage Against the Machines do we need? The same goes with pop punk. Everyone sounds like they're from Southern California now. Or Oi! Bands; kids from Podunk USA singing with cockney accents like they've grown up in London's East End. And don't get me started with the alt-country scene... I know how hard it is starting out, trying to develop a following, but think of the great bands, the ones that've pushed the envelope since their inceptions. They suffered the slings-n-arrows and perserved until people finally "got them." I guess it comes down to the American dream / work ethics, that "hard work and self-reliance" will, over time, get you where you want to go. Don't be afraid to take chances, create your own sound / style / scene, and leave the others in your dust. Which brings me to another peeve of mine: bands that have fought to the pinnacle and then keep or change their sound in order to continue milking the cash cow. They keep on cranking out the same thing or, seeing which way the wind blows, start aping newer bands to hone in on their audience. AS bad as this sounds, I don't blame them for going for more money, it's pathetic hearing 'em make fools of themselves. How many more times do you want to hear Roger Daltrey sing, "[I] hope I die before I get old." Or, a better example, is hearing old geezers call themselves the "Beach Boys." Yeesh. In short, tune-in, turn on and know when to fold up the stakes. -- *Norman Zebrowski*

ETCH magazine

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VENT

"The music business is a cruel and shallow money trench, a long plastic hallway where thieves and pimps run free, and good men die like dogs. There's also a negative side." -- **Hunter S. Thompson**

[Norman, This is from the urban legends web site sent to me anonymously... please put in VENT... kk]

Synopsis
The United States Congress is considering a 5 cent tax on email.
See the warning here.
Is it true?
No.
Why?
Bill 602P does not exist.
* '602P' is not a valid name for a Congressional bill. Bills in the House of Representatives are prefaced with 'H.R.'. Bills in the Senate are prefaced with 'S.'
* Congressman Tony Schnell does not exist.

- Lawyer Richard Stepp does not exist. * The law firm of 'Berger, Stepp and Gorman' does not exist.

* There is no Concorde Street in Vienna, Virginia.
Comments
This hoax started life as a bill supposedly being considered in Canada (and no, it is not true there either). Someone changed all the Canadian references to American references and yet another Internet hoax was born.
See also
Rebuttals
E-mail Rumor Completely Untrue from the United States Postal Service
E-mail Tax Hoax from the US Department of Energy's Computer Incident Advisory Capability
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Got a new legend? Got a question? Send it to ulz@urbanlegends.com

Subj: UPRISING!
From: uprising@email.com (rob gorczyca)
To: etch98@aol.com

Hey. This is robG from UPRISING! Punk zine. I received an email stating that you ran an email letter from an angry young man that played at a venue here in Detroit. (Migraines) -(Wired Frog).

I am responding to this only because I researched the matter the night after the whole incident occurred, and if you would have, you sure would not have run that article. (Which I really hope you didn't in the first place. I have not seen it for myself yet, but I will lose respect for your publication if you did).

That whole thing was about miscommunication. It's really too bad that people do not check into issue's before printing them, or spreading them around.

If you had checked into it, you would have found that Eddie did not get the full information on when and how he was going to get paid. If you had talked to the club, they would have told you who they talked to and their direct policies.

The fact of the matter is, if all the facts in the story we're true… sure,.. I would boycott the club, and print the article in my publication. But it's not true, and that's a shame a magazine of your publication (as I said, I haven't actually seen it yet)... would run that.

We don't have that many local venues for all ages shows down here in Detroit. And that is one that is bangin' out shows left and right. If they do have a problem with ripping people off, I have yet to hear an honest story of someone getting ripped for a show. The only reason I am standing by The Frog, is because I talked with both parties the night after the incident, and man... I'm sure as hell glad I didn't print this article. Furthermore, I thought your magazine was about music, and local scenes... this article is encouraging kids not to go to one of the only all ages venues we have…

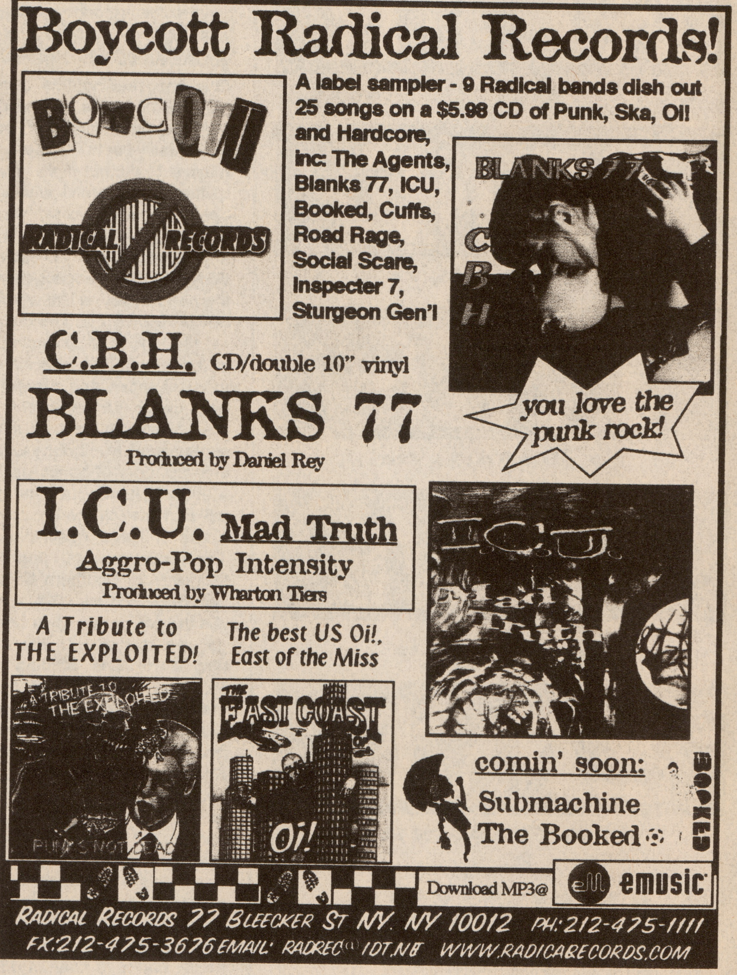
I could go on all day, but I'm sure, if others investigated the issue, will be writing you too.

Like I said, I have not seen the issue with this printed, and I really don't want to. I've enjoyed your magazine, but I will lose the respect I have for it if that is really in it.

Thanks, RobG / UPRISING!

Subj: **Reader's rant**
From: cbortolon@TFXAuto.com (Bortolon, Chris - Troy)
To: ETCH98@AOL.COM ('ETCH98@AOL.COM')

This is CAB of the Detroit based band "ADAM`S REVENGE" I sent a $15.00 press kit to Norm in August. I was curious as to why we have not had a C.D. review yet, two issues latter. I know we are not a cute all girl rock band that can only play two chords or a punk band from California, but believe it or not there are people out there (even in collage towns) that like melodic metal with a live show only second to KISS, as ours. Maybe I should send a video of our live show so you realize our potential, but then are VCR`s available on the west side of the state. I know there's no clubs.



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BLAB

INTERVIEW WITH A LEGEND:
A Brief Chat with Scott Morgan

-- **P. Hahn** --

I know **SCOTT MORGAN** will look at the title and probably think something along the lines of "*I'm not a legend,*" but after 30 odd years in the music business, including stints in some of the greatest bands to ever come out of Michigan, **The Rationals** and the **Sonic's Rendezvous Band**, Morgan has earned that accolade. While I could have talked to him for hours about his previous bands, stuff he's done, etc., I chose to focus on the events that lead to this interview, his gathering together for one night at *Gutterfest*, the surviving members of Sonic's Rendezvous (which looks vaguely like **Scot's Pirates**,) and went from there. Tonight they were playing simply as **The Rendezvous Band**, in remembrance of former leader **Fred "Sonic" Smith** who passed away a few years ago. Morgan is still quite active in music to this day, having spent most of November touring Europe with his new band **The Hydromatics**, featuring members of the **Hellacopters** from Sweden and **The Nitwitz** from Amsterdam. I'd be surprised if many of you haven't seen Morgan before. Just look for the nondescript guy in a beret. He's at a lot of local shows, showing his support. It's hard to judge exactly how much influence he's had in rock / punk / metal over the years, but it'd be safe to say music would have been worse off without him.

So how did the band (SONIC'S RENDEZVOUS BAND) start?
Well it was just after the MC5 had split up. Fred had his short-lived band Ascension, I was getting out of LIGHTNIN', my band after the Rationals. Neither of us was doing anything. I'd originally thought about doing something with Wayne Kramer. He was the talkative type to Fred's strong silent type; unfortunately, Wayne was headed off to jail. He told me that I should talk to Fred, because he wasn't doing anything right then - so Fred and I got together. It took a few years to evolve into what it eventually became.

How did the band's unique sound come about?
It wasn't a set plan; we just wanted to play some rock n roll music. We didn't want to do any old Rationals or MC5 stuff, we just wanted to do something original, write some new songs. There was no malice of forethought at the time. At the time all the big stuff was like Grand Funk, Nugent, Mitch Ryder, Seger, Cooper, etc. We were the best-kept secret in Detroit.

SCOTT MORGAN

So how did Sweet Nothing, come about?
Well we'd only released one single, "City Slang," in 1978. There'd been a bunch of bootlegs and we had a bunch of tapes, but that was it. It was after Fred died, there was a lot of talk about trying to release Sonic's Rendezvous Band tapes. Patti Smith [Fred's wife] was originally going to do it, but it became too much for her. I was talking to people and started to get some interest. Then our former manager, Freddie Brooks talked to Patti about putting it out. He had a partner who was going to put up some money and Patti OK'd it. So that's how it came about.

Are there any plans, now that the band is mostly reunited, to do something, such as a new recording, or touring?
I don't even know if tonight's going to go. But I'd be into it. Whether we can work the business end out of it or not? I don't know. Either way I definitely want to do some more stuff with The Hydromatics.

Speaking of the business end of it how has the music business changed / evolved since you first started?
It's more "corporate" right now. CKLW (AM 800 in Detroit based in Canada) was the big station, at night it had a powerful enough signal to reach to the Gulf of Mexico. When FM radio came along in the early 70's, we thought it was going to be great; we could play anything we wanted. All that signal, playing everything from Hank Williams, MC5 and John Coltrane. But after a couple years, the format tightened and it became far worse than AM radio ever was. It closed a lot of things out. Radio doesn't control what gets played, but what *doesn't* get played. If you've got a band on a local label, commercial FM radio won't play them, nor will MTV, which is even bigger. It's really one big radio station based out of New York. It's a closed shop. If you're not on one of the "Big 5" labels you don't get played on commercial radio or MTV. The entire business has become corporate right down to the record stores selling rack space. Look at a band like Limp Bizkit. Without a major label behind them they'd never have sold as many records as they have. Everything is wrapped up in it, even the booking agents. There isn't much indie left, it's a small corner of the business.

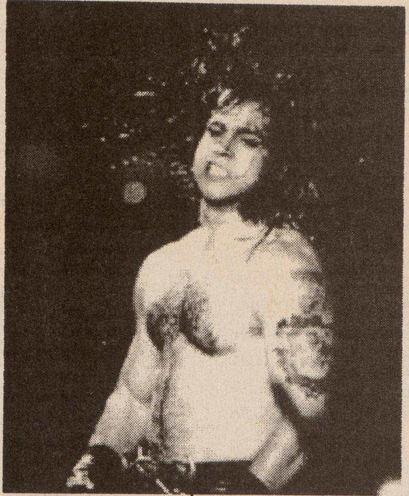
How has a small scene, like Ann Arbor, changed with the changes in the music industry?
Ann Arbor's always been pretty good. They say it's a major part of the Detroit music scene, I mean it's where the Stooges came from, the Rationals and Bob Seger. The MC5 moved there before they recorded their first album. It's always been an important part of the Detroit scene; the scene should be called Southeast Michigan.

Was there any one thing that made Ann Arbor that important?
It's an interesting town. I've heard it said that it's an acupuncture point on the face of the Earth, I'm not sure if that's true, but... It's a college town, and you always have new faces, with new ideas. It's also pretty well off, not as well off as Grosse Pointe or Birmingham, but it's not depressed. I can't put my finger on it, but it always seems to be able to put something out that's good.

In retrospect, there were a lot of questions I could have asked Scott, maybe more direct questions, but I've found that interviews where you let the subject run with the ball produces far better results than trying to direct the interview. As to Scott's laughing comment about not knowing how "tonight's going to go," well if you missed it, it was easily the best proof yet that if the Stooges / MC5-era Detroit sound isn't as important as the Sun or the Specter eras were, then they (the Sun / Specter Era's) weren't that important either. While some publications make up lists of greatest bands, based on record sales or influence, here was a band that did one better. They did more than influence, they molded. Without bands like the Rationals, MC5, or even Sonic's Rendezvous Band, the past 3 years of *Gutterfest* wouldn't have existed. Is Morgan a legend? Definitely.

GLENN DANZIG: SATAN'S CHILD

-- DAVID LEE --



Some call him "Lucifer," while others label him "Satan" or "El Diablo," but **GLENN DANZIG** simply calls him "Dad." And, like any good son would do when asked, Danzig is back again, for his 6th time, in his father's stead to spread depravity and malevolence. Well, maybe not. If you're not hip to Danzig's dark humor by now, chances are you never will be. If there were ever a man who's been more adept at seeing the world in its true and twisted way, and then goof about it any better than Danzig, he'd have been a rock star too. As always, Danzig is extreme and best listened to [or viewed] with a sense of humor. **Danzig 6:66 Satan's Child** is completely un-compromised by any thought of commercial potential. The major record labels are gone, so Danzig captains his own ship this time out and, though he holds a mirror to society, he never forgets that a song begins and ends with rock-n-roll. There's almost an industrial feel to Satan's Child that's grown from the blues romp of Danzig's early records, into a Sodom and Gomorrah heavy metal dance track, while the mix is bloody as hell. As if a new record wasn't enough of an occasion to get with Glenn Danzig for a chat, there's also a final nail to be driven in the coffin of **SAMHAIN**, which is exactly what Glenn will be doing as he tours in support of Satan's Child, where the special guest spot will be filled by, you guessed it: Samhain. That's 2 bands, same singer, in 1 night. No wonder why Hell wasn't big enough.

I have to admit that, to this day, I've never heard Blackaciddevil, but after having played Satan's Child incessantly, I'm thinking that I might be missing something, have I?

GLENN DANZIG: It's a little different. This one's a little bit more guitar heavy. The guitar kind of got buried on the last one. I don't know? This one's kind of like all the Danzig records. I took the best elements from albums one-through-5 and added some new stuff. It's kind of like an overview with some new stuff added to it.

You ended this record with a bluesy feel, which is kind of where DANZIG started.
Yeah, that's a song that I wrote for Johnny Cash a while back.

Is that right?
Yeah. He had it on a record that American Recordings put out.

Do you still have any kind of relationship with JOHNNY CASH after having left American yourself?
I don't know if he's still with American or not, [but] I haven't talked to him in a real long time. There's a song on Blackaciddevil that I wrote for Johnny because he liked "13," plus his friends liked it, so he asked me to write him another song and I wrote him this song called "Come to Silver." I showed it to him and he liked it. But once I left American, I didn't want to give it to them, so I did it on Blackaciddevil. Jerry Cantrell did some leads on it and a couple of the other songs.

Without trying to get off on too much of a tangent, I'm absolutely amazed that you and Cash would have anything to do with each other, given your respective images. He's devoutly Christian and you...well...you aren't.
He's probably one of the coolest guys that I've ever met. He's a real musician; I can't say enough nice things about him because he's a really nice guy and a great songwriter.

Did you ever get a chance to run through any of his classic numbers? I can just imagine you doing "Ring of Fire" together.
No, but I have a version of him and I, a couple of versions actually, that Rick (Rubin) recorded on DAT of us doing "13" and that's really cool.

Alright, you've gone through another record company and who knows how many legal battles to get this record out, is it getting a bit tiring to do this with each record?
No, because it's free and clear, and it's great! I had my big lawsuit with American and we settled that. The Hollywood Records thing, thankfully, never went to the lawsuit stage; I got a nice settlement and left. I got all of my stuff back and I have a lot of stuff coming back from American too, so it's pretty cool right now. The situation that I'm in now is the best of both worlds, because I've got my own label and real distribution, it's great.

I understand that people will be able to download the record directly from the Internet, is that right?
Right. You can now download 2 songs from the record. If you go to the E-Magine music site you can hear pieces of the whole record, every song. You can download either "Five Finger Crawl" or "Unspeakable", but they're the only ones that you can download right now.

Are you charging for that?
No, no for free. It's a pretty cool deal.

Having watched DANZIG grow since its birth, it's been interesting to witness the evolution of what you're doing and how radio has grabbed onto some of it. At the very beginning, it didn't look like it was gong to be something that radio was going to go for, but once they saw the kids going nuts over it, they jumped in. The one song that I hear more than any of the others is "Mother," so I'm wondering if you worry much about the public having a bad reaction to what you're doing now, because it's somewhat removed from what you were doing on "Mother?"

Yeah, I get the publishing reports and the songs that are getting played the most are: "Mother," "Can't Speak" and "Dirty Black Summer," but "Sacrifice" too though. Man, in some markets "Sacrifice" gets played to this day.

Are there certain spots in the country, or even the world, that've been consistently strong markets for your music?
I can tell you one thing, Detroit's always been a good market for any of the bands that I've been in and we always look forward to coming into Detroit, because you know it's going to be crazy, you know that everyone has been waiting for you to come and, it is just like ...explosion city. L.A. too. L.A. and Detroit.

What about New York?
Yeah, New York too, but it's different. It's not as crazy as Detroit. I've been gong there since The Misfits and Samhain, and we've played there lots of times. If I had to pick one of our strongest markets I'd have to say, "Yeah, it is Detroit!" And it's the murder capital!

There you go! "Murder City U.S.A." is what the tourism board likes to say, I think. You live in LA now, don't you?
I've been living here for 10 years. This is where the tour is starting after a one off show in Boston when we get back from our press trip to Europe.

Are you going to be playing guitar live like you did on this and the last record?
I played most of the guitar parts, except for the stuff that Jerry Cantrell did on the last record. But I didn't play the guitar entirely on this one. Jeff Chambers played a lot of the guitar, but I do play on a lot of it too. I played guitar on a bunch of the tracks from **Danzig 4** and some on the **Thrall** EP but not live. I'm a singer on stage and I've got to go crazy!

Are there a lot of stage production tie-ins to the new record?
I think that we're going to bring a video screen and, maybe, some things that the guys can stand on to look out over the audience.

Who is going to be playing guitar for you?
Todd Youth. He was in Murphy's Law and he's the new guitar player for the band.

Twenty years down the road from where you started do you feel like you have completed what you set out to do and in which respect do you feel you still have room to move in?
It's still growing and as long as there's still stuff for me to explore, places for me to go and new things to conquer. It'll never be complete.

Is there anything that you won't do?
I won't do Backstreet Boys' kind of music; sellout music. I won't play the game, that's why I'm at the label that I'm at now. It's my label, through E-Magine, and it's my game. It isn't much of a game, because it's like, I put out a record, go out on tour and that's it. None of the stupid crap where some stupid dork from a record company comes in holding a cell phone and goes "Hey this is hot right now so try and make the record sound like this." There won't be any of that anymore. There won't be anybody doing that. Then when we don't do it, there won't be anyone standing there trying to decide whether or not they should work our record.

Having done this as long as you have, is there a certain way that things work if you want to get your record played, or are you ready to do all of that yourself?
No, I don't do that. As far as buying ads, we don't do that. We never did and never will. They'll pick it up and decide whether or not they're going to play it, but we still have to go out on the road and get the buzz going, because there are so many trendy bands and there are so many labels offering radio stations money to play records, for a band like us, we have to work a little harder.

Do you feel bitter because of all of the work that you've done, to establish a certain kind of scene that others have walked in, after the fact, and basically copied what you've done without paying the same dues?
Yeah, I know the people that've come in, ripped off what I did and made it kind of poppy; I don't care about those people. It's what it is and those people are what they are and people can see through all of that. It's a trendy thing and then it's gone. We *do* have to work a lot harder than other bands and we have to prove, each time we go out, that there's still an audience for what we do. It's the same thing for other bands, like AC/DC, that've been around. Recently Nine Inch Nails, I guess Trent booked a club tour because it had been so long since his last real record, that he didn't know if there were any NIN fans still out there. I knew that there were and so does everybody else because we see him in Billboard where he came in at number one but you still have to go out there and prove it.

I know that you're playing The State Theatre in Detroit, but what about in the other markets? Does the venue size vary from town to town?
It's pretty much all about that size. It's weird because last time we did 2 Detroit shows, we did the *Ozz-Fest*, then we came back and did a State Theatre show on Halloween and then we came back a month or 2 later and played the Palace of Aubum Hills. [It's] really strange. So, you never know because one day you're playing a big place and the next you're going to be playing a smaller place.

Is there a particular environment that you prefer to play in?
I like, and I've always said this, I like something around 5000 seats because you've got enough people there to give it that crazy live energy and it's not so big like an arena.

There's just enough that you can see the balcony start to shake a little bit eh?
Big or small enough, that there's this crazy amount of energy but not too big where you lose any intimacy.

Do you think bigger places become faceless for the performer?
Well, it depends. Some people try to put up a video screen and stuff like that and make it a little more...I don't know. That's my personal thing. I realize that some bands can't do that and I understand. Maybe they have a high overhead when they're on tour, I don't know.

I wanted to ask you about one lyric that jumped out at me from the new record, "*All I save is my pain.*" What were you trying to say with that line?
"All I save is my pain?"

Yeah. Or should it be pretty obvious what it is?
No, it's pretty straightforward.

Nothing deeper?
No. Of course you could look at the lyric and think about it, and it'll get deeper but that's about it.

You've never been terribly subtle in your lyrics, but has there been a particular lyric or thought that people have consistently misinterpreted?
Yeah, one of the things that I do in my lyrics is to make them pretty simple, so that they can be interpreted lots of different ways and each person can make it their own personal thing. I leave it open and sometimes it's really cool, because kids will tell you about a song and what it meant to them and you'll immediately get a psychological profile of them.

We're almost out of time and we've talked about everything but the really big news, you're doing some SAMHAIN shows along with this tour, how's that going to work?
We're going to be doing a Samhain set on this whole tour [that ended December 3rd] and then that'll be it for Samhain.
There were a couple of different versions of SAMHAIN, so who's in this one?
It's going to be Damien, Steve, London and me.

I am looking forward to seeing the blood!
Me too!

THE MISFITS

FIENDS... OR FOES?

-- **DAVID LEE** --

Few bands have taken the mantra "hard, fast, loud" to such extremes as **THE MISFITS**. Their blend of campy horror and punk rock, laid out a template for a whole string of imitators most of whom are experiencing far greater commercial success than the **Misfits** ever did. Few of these groups have ever come close to the **Misfits**' magic formula, but that doesn't stop them from trying. 23 years later, horror rock and zombie makeup is the norm and even Casey Kasem is, occasionally, forced to give space to some of the **Misfits'** bastard children. If Rob Zombie owes half of his image to Alice Cooper then the other half has a lien on it from the **Misfits**. Given the current attitude of **Misfits** founder and bassist, **JERRY ONLY**, Rob might want to watch his back for fear that Jerry may decide to come collecting.

After spending the last 2 years dealing both with internal and external dramas, the **Misfits** have returned from the grave to spew forth 18 more tales of demonic domination and monstrous mayhem set to a rockabilly beat on crystal meth. **FAMOUS MONSTERS** has absolutely, positively nothing new in terms of style and that is exactly as it should be. The record creaks and groans and just like the B-grade movies that inspire it, scares the shit out of you despite the fact that you know exactly what is coming. I had thing dial up **Jerry Only** at his human place of business and between the whine of drill presses and other workshop noises only laid out his Halloween plans in full detail.

From what I have read this is very nearly the album that wasn't.

Jerry Only: Yeah, that's for damn sure!

You have a new singer; you lost Michael Graves, found another, and then Graves came back. Seems like a bit of drama was never far away for the last couple of years?

Well... people get abducted by aliens and it's really hard to try and get them back, because the ships are usually high in the air and you have to try and coax them down with, like, a farm animal or something, but once they come down you can get your singer back. Having done that, we're now in good shape. Mickey's a good boy, I mean, he's young and doesn't understand. When I was his age, I had my daughter, my job and my band. It's a lot of responsibility and he's going through some of that. I'm usually the "go to guy" here; I handle all of the interviews and the business end of it, so I can understand where he doesn't appreciate the concept. He didn't understand, so the aliens got him -- but we got him back!

So, a couple of anal probes, maybe an impregnation and then he was good to go?

Yeah, a couple of mutilations and we were good, but sometimes you got to take it up the "you know what" to be ready to go. So you live and learn. It's a shame because we could've spent that whole summer -- instead of trying to get somebody ready to stand in -- we could've been working on new tunes and stuff, but as a result we wrote a good album. We wrote it under the gun, but it's always easy to hit the shot from half court when no one's around and you just throw the ball up. But when you're playing in the championship game, at the buzzer, it's a much nicer feeling to hit it. I'm kind of happy about the whole situation. I think we wrote a great album and I'm really proud of it. This album goes out to all of the kids who got jobs or have to go to school, rather than stand around and say "I could be great if I didn't have to do all this shit." I had to work a full day, every day, while I was working on this record, and the only time that I got to write was from 10pm until 1am. Then I had to go to bed, so I'd be awake in the morning and go to work on machines. I didn't want to lose my fingers or something, because I was falling asleep. This group has always been about being an underdog and fighting back, hanging in there and taking your lumps for that one day [when] you might possibly prevail. I think that we're in the process of prevailing.

In addition to the entire recording and touring and work in the shop, you have a bunch of other things happening as well?

We have action figures which I have wanted my whole life! That's a really long story, but I'm trying to do some good in the world with these toys, as opposed to just worrying about the bottom line like everybody else seems to be. We have a great new George Romero video. It's always been a dream to be a zombie for George and we finally got a chance to do it. We're the only band that he'd ever do a video for, so I was honored to hear that. I'm talking with the WCW right now and hopefully, by the end of the year going to be wrestling. [*They're now a tag-team [Jerry Only, Doyle von Frankenstein and Vampiro] in the WCW, Ed.*]

So, are you going to be going after the KISS wrestlers?

They're going to have their asses handed to them! Regardless of what the story line is!

When that's done, you'll be able to carry off the KISS chicks!

Well, I haven't seen them, but I'd have to guess that they'd be all right! We're going to be wearing Misfits clothes and we're going to be on pay-per-view in all the Misfits gear, you know, a 100 million kids are going to get to experience the band and we've got a couple of ideas for soundtracks or title songs for these guys for their entrances and things like that. I think that it is a real good experience for me to be working with them. I want to be the host of "Monster Vision." I think that we should throw The Cowboy the out and we go with a real monster, which is really my ulterior motive -- to dump The Cowboy! Once I get into TNT and they see how the kids love me and what a big star that I am, flying into the seats every night from the top of the cage they'll see that it doesn't pay to fight me, they better join me! It should be interesting anyway.

There will be a world of Fiends!

That's right!

You have also switched up record labels in the midst of all this.

Right and totally at my own call. I mean, I thought Geffen sucked as a label for us. They did absolutely nothing for us and I was disappointed with them all the way across the board. It's funny because they took the same idea 2 years later with Rob Zombie and sold 2 million records. You tell me, whose record is better, Rob's or mine? You've got the same cover artist (Basil Gogos) and you've got the same ideas. His video looks just like the "Psycho" video that no one ever saw. Geffen actually had us blacklisted from MTV and we couldn't get to see it. So, hey, you want to take all of my ideas and give them to Rob? Fine because when it comes to the showdown I'm going to show you what's up! Tell him to come into the ring!

Maybe he can hold the belt for you or something.

Yeah, that's what I need!

Well, it's a *great* record, but where do you think it stands with the rest of your body of work?

I think that we've topped ourselves. I'll tell you what; I think that we topped ourselves and [did it] under the gun. That's what really impresses me about it. You always get worried because you write an album and then it's a year-and-a-half or 2 years before you get to record the next one, and you kind of lose touch with songwriting. My schedule's so intense, between my daughter who's in the video and my son who's in the clam movie, I'm always trying to do stuff with them and spend time with them. [Plus] I'm working a full day 6 days a week, so there's not really much time if you want to work out and build guitars and write music. You always have that little bit of fear, "Hey, did we lose our edge?" and then you start writing and the next thing you know you have an album like Famous Monsters in 2-½ months. You turn to yourself and say, "Well, it must be in there because it's obviously something that I'm not exercising every day and it must be coming from the heart." I'm just really happy that we were able to make such a credible album in such a short period of time. And like I say, this goes out to everyone who has to struggle to be a musician. I had to do it and you could do it too.

Now that you have two records with Graves, are you concentrating on that material when you take the show on the road?

The thing is, I like to start with a barrage of brand new material. The first song will be "The Forbidden Zone," after the intro, obviously, and then we go to "Witch Hunt," "Lost in Space," "Crawling Eye," and then we do some songs from Static Age. We do "Dig up the Bones," "I Turned into a Martian," then we to do some stuff from Walk Among Us. I usually like to do the old stuff in blocks. I'll do a Static Age block, 4 songs and then I will do a Walk Among Us block, 4 songs and then I will do Earth A.D. stuff here and there. We change them every tour and they are never the same four songs and when our next album comes out, I think, we're going to phase out everything except "Last Caress" and "Attitude" -- maybe. We'll play old stuff for encores, really. We want to make a live album and we agreed with Glenn not to record the old stuff for commercial release and I'm going to stick to my word even though he doesn't stick to his but that is another story. The thing is, I want to start phasing out the old stuff because this is a new band, but I want to leave the door open, for the next door to be open, to not really play any of the old stuff, so that on our 25th anniversary, if Glenn comes down off of his high horse, he can come out and do the encores with us when we do our tour. We'll do, maybe, 13 songs of the old stuff and Glenn can pick what he wants to play if he wants to but if he doesn't, well, then the hell with him!

I just spoke with him . . . [*You can read the Danzig piece in this issue, Ed.*]

Good, how's he doing?

He seems to be doing very well and he's doing the Samhain set on this tour, so obviously he's able to look back at the pre-Danzig stuff now.

The Misfits' shadow is bigger than him and he doesn't want to admit it. It's bigger than me but I'm almost the same size as it, because I'm in charge of handling everything on this side of the fence and I have to deal with all of the bullshit. I want the band to be bigger than me and to go on beyond my time in it. I don't want to have the Misfits die just because I drop dead. I love the band more than I love myself, and that's the way that I view it. With Glenn, he wants to sell you his new stuff, so he's going to tell you how bad the old stuff is and I never liked that kind of mudslinging. It has always seemed to me that if you have something better to say then say it or shut up.

It would be really cool to see you all do something for a 25th anniversary thing.

Well, I'm not thinking that he'd be the lead singer for our band, but I'm just saying that we'd leave out all of the old stuff for the encore and then bring him out and do a very long 13 song encore and play all of the classics. We'd do all of the classics, "Last Caress," "Astro Zombies," "Die, Die My Darling" etc.

Only because I'm curious about the business with Glenn, with all of the old material being covered by other bands, like Metallica, and the re-release of Static Age a little bit ago, do you see any of the profits from that?

No, I gave that to Glenn. Glenn made 10-cents a song so, 30-cents-a-record times 4 million, he made about a 1.2 million and I gave that up to be who I am. And let me tell you something, it was a bargain!

KELETON D.M.D.

Chris Wardell

Tag team wrestling and ninjas are usually not synonymous with music. Unless you're a member of **KELETON D.M.D**, it's all in a day's work. Keleton D.M.D has been 10 years in the making, growing from a close friendship, and a mutual admiration for making music. D.M.D is made up of vocalist / guitarist **Dave Lukasik**, drummer **Mike Gard** and bass player **Dave Arter**; they prefer to let their music do the talking. Keleton's formative years began in Kalamazoo, Michigan as "Skeleton DMD", opening for **Mt. Shasta**. Also rounding out the bill that day was their soon-to-be partners-in-crime, **Small Brown Bike**, then known as "L.E.S.C." Thanks to a fading concert poster outside a show in Grand Rapids, MI, Skeleton DMD quickly became Keleton D.M.D, cementing the trio, as we know them today.

Branding D.M.D with a specific label / style, can be a subject of obscurity. Think Big Black-meets-older Melvins, and you might be on the right trail. Compare them to whomever you want, but one thing you cannot escape is D.M.D's precision. Textbook rhythms and distinct timing that would make a stop watch quit. "*You can describe it as a machine,*" Lukasik said. "*It's about working autonomously, working together.*"

Call D.M.D "a machine," call them "an engine," however don't expect any jamming. Straight ahead songs meant to pummel the masses. DMD's first full length, **Body Double**, captures the "machine" with gears at full tilt. The album is being released on Makoto Records, a label notorious for catching great bands. One of those bands is Small Brown Bike, who will be releasing a split 7" with Quixote on Makoto.

Ubiquitous tours together have spawned interesting road stories, typical of a Small Brown / Keleton affair. One particular show in North Carolina became a tag-team wrestling style affair, which saw DMD play two songs, then tag to Small Brown Bike for two songs. What this writer wants to know, where was the steel cage? Last Halloween, fans were treated to a three-act play / concert by Quixote, Small Brown Bike and D.M.D, which Lukasik described as "*low brow.*" Plus, all three bands were dressed as ninjas, making Halloween a memorable experience.

Despite the fact that the three members live in separate towns, Keleton has managed to persevere over distance. Even though Arter lives in Chicago, Gard in Kalamazoo, and Lukasik in East Lansing, the music has not suffered. In fact, the band claims it has helped make practices better and more focused.

Hearing DMD on tape is brilliant, but to catch them live is remarkable. You have a chance in March at this year's much-heralded Michigan Fest, in Westland, just outside of Detroit. Beware of the ninjas.

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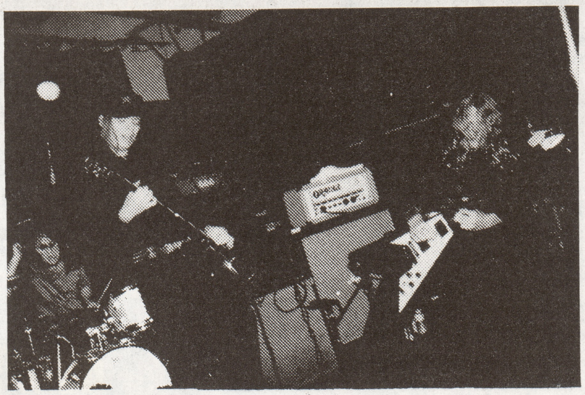
GRANDE ROCK: *A chat with the*

HELLACOPTERS

- Paul Hahn/Stephan Peterson

This past Labor Day, Stefan Petersen and I got a chance to interview Kenny, the **HELLACOPTERS'** *bassist, before their latest gig at Detroit's Magic Stick, along with* Zen Guerilla, The New Bomb Turks *and* The Supersuckers. *It has been a whirlwind couple of years since the* **Hellacopters** *released their first CD* **Super Shitty to the Max**, *during which they've released 2 more full-lengths and a multitude of 7"'s. This was their second time in Detroit this year alone, needless to say they've been burning the midnight oil as they have managed to snag a new record label, release a new album, and now they are in Detroit playing with a few of their heroes,* Wayne Kramer *and* Scott Morgan. *I had a chance to ask Kenny about a few of the things that have contributed to their success, rival publications have said that the* **Hellacopters** *represent the brash new face of punk. Here is the craziness that ensued.*



How'd the band start out?
It was a bunch of old friends -- actually Nick's old drum roadies. Nick and I grew up in Stockholm together. He told me I needed to get a new bass, and that was it. It was about our forth or fifth rehearsal, [when] we decided to make this not just some drunken idea, and decided to record it. We started to play around Stockholm, and right from the beginning we began to have support. It turned out that a friend of ours had some extra money and asked if we wanted to release an album. It was weird, I mean, right from the start we were playing gigs with bands like The Dictators, The UK Subs, The Nomads, and then with KISS at the Stockholm Stadium.

Is your sound a reaction to all the metal that's about Sweden, to the real roots of metal, the late 60's Detroit sound?
Yeah, I guess that might be one of the motivating factors, especially in Nick's case, to do something else, The Turks and Supersuckers are the instigators of 90's punk rock. It actually might be the situation with a lot of people in this kind of music, old skateboarders and punks realizing the roots, like Chuck Berry and Sex Pistols.

How did it feel to play with Scott Morgan and Wayne Kramer?
I can't tell you, it's not in the books. I mean every time I find a Rendezvous Band Live tape it's like, "Woo another nugget."

You know they're playing here next weekend?
Yeah, I know it's ironic. If we were back home doing nothing, we'd take every cent we could get our hands on and come over. It's weird now that we're on this continent and they're playing and we'll miss it.

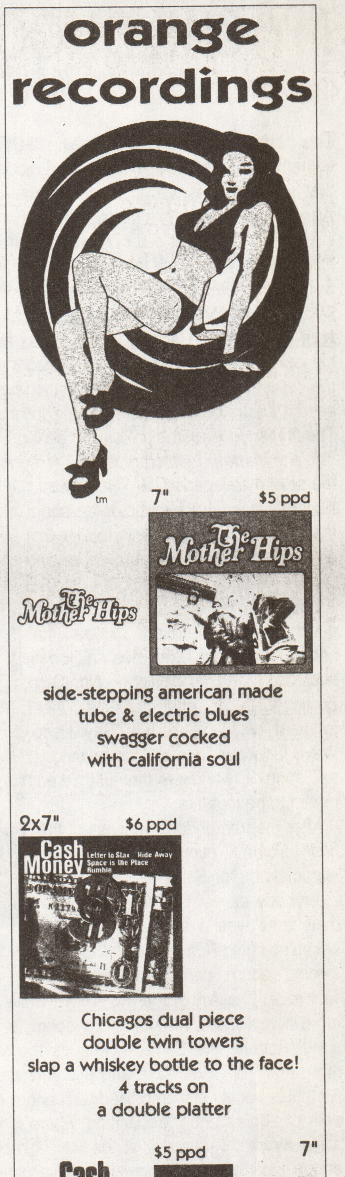
How has your sound progressed from Shitty... to Grande?
Well, on the first couple of albums it was rawer. On the first one we had distortion on everything, we were like, "Where can we add another pedal?" The second wasn't quite as distorted, we tried to figure out how certain bands made certain sounds, as opposed to trying to mimic other bands. For the third one we went to this studio in the country run by this old hippie guy and brought a whole bunch of different stuff in and just tried to make something that sounded good to us.

You've done covers by the MC5, and played with Wayne Kramer, was the title Grande, in reference to Detroit's old Grande Ballroom?
Yeah, this is like our "Graceland." Although looking at the city this morning as we drove in, it was much more like "crackland;" everyone was staggering around and missing limbs and such.

How are the waters for this kind of music overseas?
Well, it just got over there. You're just starting to see Supersuckers and New Bomb Turks shirts over there. Big bands like that you're like, "Ok, yeah they're good, but I've already seen them," are starting to get big now. We're considered the new frontier of Scandinavia.

Is it a burden to be considered that new frontier?
It's hard to see bands, which you grew up listening too, [that] were the frontier back then, and then they show up to see you, the new rock star, as they're not doing so well now. It's the media; if they don't have anything to write about they make up dumb stuff like that. Everything's rock-n-roll now.

True to his word, Kenny and crew went up unto the stage that night and proceeded to lay down the rock n roll as few can. **Grande Rock**, *their latest might well go down to be considered one of the finest albums of this decade, as it so blatantly recalls the days of yesteryear, long forgotten for their simplicity, and adds to it a 90's flair. This is the kind of album most bands one day hope to record, the 'Copters already have. At the end of their set the capacity crowd was treated to an encore with Kramer and Morgan, a sneak preview of the next weekend. On another note, Kenny spoke English as well as I do, proving that this isn't another Hooked-On-Phonics band.*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MY CHILDHOOD OBSESSION

Say Hello and Wave Goodbye to Soft Cell

The first time I remember seeing **SOFT CELL** was on a morning news program, something like the *Today Show*. The report was on this strange pop music from overseas that used synthesizers in place of guitars. They showed a glimpse of Soft Cell; **Marc Almond** prancing with a microphone in hand, while **David Ball** stood stiffly behind a Casio keyboard in a leather suit coat with one of those skinny ties. Man, they were ***so*** cool in an '80's kind of way. And, that song, "*Sometimes I feel I've got to...bam bam... run away...*" Soft Cell's "Tainted Love" was easily one the catchiest cover songs ever to hit radio.

I think I got their record as a Christmas gift. Being in eighth grade I had little idea what a **Non-Stop Erotic Cabaret** was, and, as far as that brown paper bag Marc had stuffed in his jacket -- I didn't even want to consider what could have been in there. However elusive the cover may have seemed, the lyric sheet revealed much more. A whole underworld of seedy, frustrated characters looking for some excitement to add to their dull, tragic lives. The first song "Frustration" says it perfectly, "*I have a hobby, but it's really nothing special, I do the garden, I watch girls.*" Other songs forget the pretense and just dive straight into the sexual escapades. On "Sex Dwarf," Almond goes into explicit detail about the life of a small, perverted sexual deviant; "*I would like you on a long black lead.*" The other single, "Bedsitter," is an all too accurate description of the night clubber that parties all night and has a lonely secluded life in daylight. Non-Stop Erotic Cabaret ends on its finest moment, with the ballad "Say Hello, Wave Goodbye." Here, Almond sings a sad song of two lovers that just weren't meant to be together.

MARC ALMOND

After the tremendous success of their first album, everybody had huge expectations for Soft Cell's next album. Everybody except Soft Cell, who knew their fame was a fluke. After all, they weren't singing "Oh Mickey," they were singing about demented freaks and illicit love. **The Art of Falling Apart**, while a far better than Non-Stop Erotic Cabaret, was more complicated, foregoing any songs that catered to radio's slim dimensions. The first song "Forever the Same" continues the story of "Frustration" with the man who wants more than he'll ever have and this time around there's more drama and instrumentation. Almond's vocals are embroiled with anger on "Where the Heart Is" as he sings about the pain of adolescence, exclaiming "*home is where the hurt is*." While those seedy scenes are still running rampant, songs like "Numbers" and "Baby Doll" have more to do with the anguish of the characters in these situations. As a bonus, two additional songs were included, the bizarre "Hendrix Melody" which worked about as well as could be expected, and "Martin" a scary extended number about a psychotic little boy. With the chanting of "*kill, kill, kill...*" over the haunting lyrics, "Martin" still gives me the creeps.

Following The Art of Falling Apart most of the public had written Soft Cell off as another "one hit wonder." Few people in the U.S. aren't even aware there was a third Soft Cell record. Of course, with a title like **The Last Night in Sodom**, Soft Cell weren't pandering to the general public. This scathing record is filled to the brim with moments of desperation, that only the lowest of the low have dared to sink. Beginning with their final take on the frustrated male, Almond aptly titles the man "Mr. Self Destruct." The next song, "Slave to This" is the only song by Soft Cell I entirely dislike, with Almond yelling incessantly, it's truly a horrid piece of work. Other than that unfortunate mistake, for a band that was on the brink of splitting, it's an incredibly strong, compelling album. The music's more traditional rock and roll than synth-pop, sounding almost rockabilly on "Down in the Subway." The other songs continue down the path of murder and debauchery Soft Cell had so well marked. "Where Was Your Heart (When You Needed It Most)" completes the album as Almond describes a relationship from the girl's point of view "*He'll just not give up 'til he's messed up your head, a dish in the disco but a pig in the bed.*"

With these three records, all of which have recently been remastered and re-released, Soft Cell left a synth-pop legacy. The magic they created, with Ball supplying the soundtrack for Almond's lusty characters, ran its course to reveal the essence of human need. Almond has gone on to have a solo career of sorts, after a series of missteps he seems to have gotten it right on his recent release **Open All Night**. Ball went on to perform with a number of different artists, and even had a hugely successful techno dance hit with "Swamp Thing" as part of **THE GRID**. In recent interviews Almond, like everybody else from the 80's, has mentioned getting back with Ball for a Soft Cell reunion. I'll never be the young man I was when Soft Cell first opened their dark doorway to me, but, I'm still willing to hear what they have to say, because there are always places left to explore. -- **MIKE PFEIFFER**.

IT'S ONLY ROCK AND ROLL

THE COLUMN THAT DOESN'T TREAT STARS IN THE KINDEST OF WAYS

Bob Toole

...**CELINE DION**, in a gesture showcasing her grievous nature and sense of humanity, recently invited the families of those massacred at Columbine High School to her show in Denver [somebody restrain me while I wind up]. What's up with all of these esteem-challenged pop stars and their sympathetic drivel? Celine, honeybunch, these people have been gabbing to shrinks from the four corners for five months now. What gives you the slightest inclination that they want to be paraded out in front of 13,000 jackasses that think classical music is the soundtrack from the next $200 million Hollywood blockbuster? Pompous, ugly, dumb Canadian.

...Balding rocker / jazz-miester **STING** confessed to aging magazine, *Esquire*: "*I still look at women, and I'll still express my desire and admiration for women - in my wife's hearing. She may hit me around a bit (mimics slap on the cheek). I say, 'Look, when I'm sick of looking at beautiful women, I'll be sick of you,' so I kind of get away with it.*" Right, then. She's completely pacified by that pledge of utter devotion. Parents keep your kids away from him; he's the dirty bastard that wrote that song about a 16-year-old girl. There's nothing but bad news in this camp. Sting ought to have his mug posted up in every post office in Britain.

...On a lighter note: Doesn't it feel good to be an American, knowing that our very own **NEIL YOUNG** will be putting out some guitar jack?

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LIVE

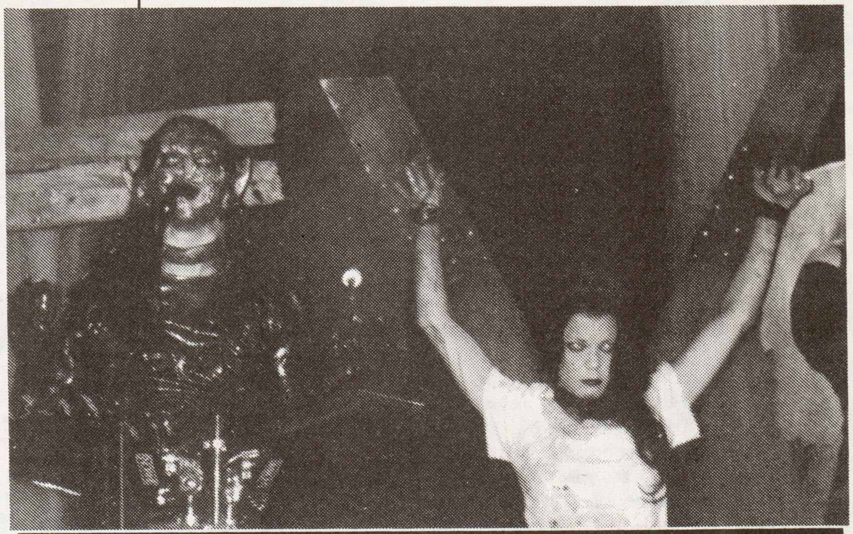
— GUTTERFEST III —
-- The Magic Stick Detroit / The Gold Dollar Detroit --
--Thursday-Saturday September 9-11 --

I must congratulate **Willie Wilson**, because once again he has brought an incredible collection of bands to Detroit for what is the closest thing to a European festival to hit these parts. The highlights of this weekend included: **WAYNE KRAMER**, **THE CHEATER SLICKS**, **BANTAM ROOSTER**, **THE GO** and **THE SONICS RENDEZVOUS BAND** (a reworking of the GREAT Detroit band from the late '70s.) Any one of these acts would've been an incredible night of music, combining them not only added the cookies to an already fine cake, but was the kind of lineup that legendary stories are formed by. The first night was at the Dollar, and it included **THE SIGHTS**, **THE WITCHES** and **THE CONQUERORS**. The first band, The Sights, play a very Who-influenced Mod style of garage. They're all young kids and I only look forward to more and better from them. Up next were the Witches, of whom only **Troy** was keeping it real. Everyone else had multi colored shirts / pants on. Very un-Witches like. However, it seemed to deter them not at all, as they played their frenzied reverb 'til it feeds back rock mayhem like they were colorblind. The headliners were a surf /garage group hailing from the Twin Cities. Adding the best of surf, to the best of garage had nearly been done to death, however if you have the balls to do it right then you'll blow by the rest. The Conquerors were in this category, playing above the average band. Not many people were here and they missed the start to what was a great weekend of rock. The next night in the big club, we were graced first by **THE NUMBERS**, who played first due to scheduling Snafu's, then came Detroit's **WHITE STRIPES**, followed by **THE STREETWALKIN' CHEETAHS**, and finally Brother Wayne. The Numbers play loud aggressive music, combining equal parts of Mod and first generation British punk, normally not two styles incorporated together, but they combine it like, "2+2=4." I've heard they recently had a CD come out (Sorry **Scott** I was outta town for the release, I will talk to you about it though), you should try and snag it. The White Stripes were up next, they're like "Bantam Rooster" for those people afraid of "real" rock. Art rock for trendy hipsters who don't want to stray to far from their radio in case the Planet plays new Dave Matthews. Up next were the Streetwalkin' Cheetahs. They displayed everything right about rock n roll, nudity, blood and alcohol abuse. Ripping through a punk / metal-influenced set they reminded me a lot of the Dead Boys combined with the Hookers. Finally it was time for Wayne Kramer. Stepping up on stage, backed by the Cheetahs after a half-hour rest, he launched into his set. Playing mostly songs off his latest album, he did dip back a few years playing "Dangerous Madness," off his first album, and stepping back even further for "Kick Out The Jams" and "Rama Lama." Now the night was Saturday, the evening we all had been waiting for **THE RENDEZVOUS BAND**. However, **THE SOUL DAD BROTHERS**, playing the small alcove in front of the gal's laboratory, started it. They started early because the Cheater Slicks showed up, but it was only the good half, the bad half was en route. They play a two-piece frenzy not unlike Bantam Rooster, but more blues influenced. The first band to grace the main stage was the aforementioned Bantam Rooster. Again **Mike Alonso** scares me as he continually manages to keep his drum kit above the level of **Tommy Potter**'s axe, not a small feat people. This was one of the best sets I've been privileged to see Bantam do. Far and above the best set of the *'Fest*, outside of The Rendezvous Band. This is a band on the rise. Up next were the Cheater Slicks, after they all arrived, playing in the same small area that The Soul Dad Brothers played. It took me awhile to realize that they really do sound like ass until you get right up close and hear the genius that they are. From a distance it sounded really awful, but the closer you got the more you recognized what they were doing. They are 12 strings of pure evil folks. Next on the big stage was **THE GO**, the scene's darlings, signed to Sub Pop. Remember the last band from Detroit signed to Sub Pop? Sure you don't, they were **BIG CHIEF**. The Go, for all the hype surrounding them, didn't really live up to their reputation. Not that I didn't end up liking them by the time they ended their set with "Gloria," but it took me awhile to turn on to them. Much better live than their disappointing new LP on Sub Pop. After what seemed like forever it was the time everyone had been waiting for, The Sonic Rendezvous Band. Here was **Scott Morgan**, **Ron Ashton**, **Gary Smith** and [instead of **Fred "Sonic" Smith**] **Dezniz Tek**, formerly of **RADIO BIRDMAN**. They were one of the most important bands to bridge the gap between punk and metal, and also one of rock-n-roll's best-kept secrets. From such classics as "City Slang," their only single from 1979, to "Dangerous," "Sweet Nothing," and "Heart Of Stone." The crowd spanned a couple of generations; from those just old enough to get in [it was 21+], to those old enough to have gotten into 21+ shows back in the 70's when the band started. It was the crowning moment of what was an incredible weekend. Kudos once again to Willie, the third time was the charm. On one last note, The Sonic Rendezvous Band also played "Let's Do It Again," and in both the case of this marvelous event and The Sonic Rendezvous band as well. -- **P. Hahn**.

— CHRISTIAN DEATH MORTIIS GODHEAD —
-- St. Andrews Hall Detroit October 16 --

I expected to see a dark show with a bit of horror thrown in, but damn what I experienced was down right evil! Driving through a cold, rainy night, I arrived just in time to catch most of **GODHEAD**'s show. Godhead plays industrial Goth with a 90's metal influence. They have a strong stage presence and decent songs, the lead singer reminded me of a cross between Billy Corgan and Uncle Fester from the *Addams Family* -- wait a minute, aren't they the same person?

MORTIIS followed with a stage show that is still affecting me days later. For those of you not familiar with Mortiis, he's a strange fellow to say the least. Picture a troll-ish man, with Spock's ears, Pinocchio's nose and dressed in a mixture of Medieval wizard garb and S&M bondage gear. Mortiis' stage set included three sets of drum pads each with a skull on the front, a kettledrum, a torture post, an axe and other assorted torturing material. His band included two very Gothic percussionists and a female vocalist. Mortiis' music is hard to describe, it's epic chamber music, very atmospheric yet not relaxing at all, probably due to the pounding rhythms driving each track on like a battle march. It would be quite difficult to translate this music live, so Mortiis doesn't even try; he and his percussionists play their drum pads to sequenced music coming through the speakers. Mortiis is in it for the show, his scary presence was only the beginning to the horror he had in store for us. During his second song he spoke in his low demonic voice. Later he brought out a bucket of blood and poured it over his head. Now, covered in blood, he brought a woman on stage and attached her wrists and legs to the torture post. I was a bit shocked, but nothing I couldn't handle. With a look of terror on her face as she hung there suspended, Mortiis continued to play. After this song, a torch was brought to Mortiis, which he blew heartily at, throwing the flame from the torch; I could feel the heat and smell the flames. My already heightened apprehension grew at this point. Before I continue, let me tell you about the audience. I was expecting a crowd of Goths in leather and make up. However, in addition to the Goths, there was something of a much more sinister element here; older men and women dressed in black, some long hair death metal fans and two clowns with hideous make up, basically this was a gathering for Satanists, serial killers, and freaks. Mortiis finished his song with the woman still attached to the post, he then got a knife, gave an intense glare to the audience and proceeded to cut the woman open, spilling blood from her stomach. The audience cheered this horrifying act, coupled with Mortiis bringing his victim down, putting her over his shoulders and running out into the audience, was the final straw for my anxiety. Shaking, I watched Mortiis run off through the audience to "dump the body." I was seriously scared about Mortiis returning to the stage, I didn't want him coming near me! He ran back through the audience, got on stage and finished his set. With a sigh of relief, I wasn't harmed during his set and that it was all staged, I realized for his show to affect me this much -- he was awesome!



MORTIIS

CHRISTIAN DEATH, even with their elaborate stage show and **Valor**, the lead singer, at his most charismatic couldn't really impress me. Starting their set in wedding dresses and covered in veils, they played loud gothic rock, with some extreme guitar playing. I'm not really a fan of Christian Death, they rely far to heavily on their guitars to carry the songs and Valor's shrill voice tends to annoy me. Their presence was good though. After a few songs draped in the veils, they left the stage and returned in outrageous black outfits. The songs became heavier and faster, with Valor looking like an Egyptian demon parading around the stage. Before too long, their bassist broke a bass string (how hard do you have to be playing to have this happen?) and they took a full 10 minutes to get her guitar restrung. During this time I thought about how late it was and there was no way I was going to see more than what I've already seen. A disturbing night I wouldn't recommend to anybody, but being near Halloween and always liking a good scare, you could say I got what I came for. -- **Mike Pfeiffer**.

-- RICHMOND FONTAINE [SEAN-NA-NA] --
-- UC Commons Missoula, MT October 27 --
-- Jay's Upstairs Missoula, MT October 27 --
-- Joel's House Missoula, MT October 28 --

These guys passed through Lansing a few years ago (one of the few shows **THE CLUTTERS** didn't open…well we opened for them the next day at Wherehouse Recs in East Lansing, MI) and I ran into an old friend that I hadn't seen in years, a guy I used to work with downstairs at the old El Azteco, **Dave Harding**. They called him "Bouge Dave", possibly because of the street he lived on. Or was the man a slob? Those were the daze. It just so happens that Dave was thwapin' bass for these Portland dudes. Checked the show out, pretty good. I admit, I was a bit suspicious about the singer sounding an awful a lot like Jay Ferrar. Years later, (let's say Oct. '99). I pick up a copy of The Rocket and **RICHMOND FONTAINE** graced the cover…whoa shit! The Rocket is THE northwest music freebee; covering all concerned (i.e. pretty hip) and these guys got the cover! RF was wrapping up a small tour and was booked for a radio gig here on the University of Montana campus. I figured on checking it out and say "hey" to Dave. The UC Commons is basically a studio lounge with all the fluorescents crackling at high speed and no one there but the band. Of course Dave was confused when I approached him. The reunion ensued, beers popped, etc. The band got set for the live broadcast, except they have a new drummer, **Sean Oldham**, and some cowboy with a pedal steel! Now, a pedal steel player is a real gem to find, especially if he's multi-instro… his name is **Paul Brainard** and call that man "the breeze"! The boys get going and Paul lifts the top off with an easy slide, everything solidifies and now we see where RF is! Granted, at the radio deal, the P.A. itself was almost non-existent due to the light vocal mix and the sound had to be on the quiet side, considering it is a study lounge. I sat pretty close to the band just to hear all four points and strain to hear **Willy Vlautin**'s vocals. The short set played to me, my g-friend, Miss Montana (THE real Miss Montana) and her friend, a friendly family of four and the soundman roped me in. There are two sides to this band, serious rockers in a frenzied "Hüsker Dü / Uncle Tupelo" vein. There's also the sweet country that swung slow and froze you for that very moment -- you really can't help it. When they turn it down a notch, listen to Vlautin's stories he croons, those captivating melodic runs with that pedal steel to knock you back on your ass and say… "Beautiful… " It was just an appetizer. We liked the gig so much we figured on seeing them at the local dive Jay's Upstairs. Two other bands were also on the bill. The opener, **SEAN-NA-NA**, was one of those crooners with a guitar, plus a dude playing a Fender Rhodes. Every song sounded the same; he enunciated every word with extra syllables, every word! "My-hy a-ha-ass smells" No wonder he's signed to **Kill Rock Stars**. RF played second to a mostly punk rock crowd (a few RF fans were present) and they stopped the show and won everyone over. You could hear the band this time and it knocked me out. The new material from their CD, ***Lost Son***, was really something to behold. This band has shaped itself into something brimming with substance. Great tunes like "15-Year-Old Kid in Nogales", the blistering "Mule" and the CD's knockout punch "Contrails," held the audience at a standstill or a sway with the music. At this point in RF's career, you can say that they've developed into a band that's transcended beyond the whole No Depression death grip, and I'll be the first to say to hell with all of the Ferrar comparisons. Listen to Willy talk, he actually talks like he sings, there isn't any point on going any further, so let's bury the tiring comparison. Besides, I hear a little Steve Earle in his voice. For dessert, the RF boys had a day off and were looking for something to do. They were approached to play a house party. Harding let us know the address; we scored some beer and went to the hangout. A fan named **Joel** set them up for this informal evening, basically passing the guitar and the bottle of Beam. Anyone who wanted to sing could or pick up the guitar and lead everyone into something. **Paul** had a buddy come by [I think his name was **Ray**] and, throughout, he played some fantastic finger pick'n' country blues. The bottle kept going around and around. After the two-day blow out, I gained a lot of respect for RF, to just keep on doing their thing, and the end results really paid off. They're something to behold; the new disc is great (on **Cavity Search Recs**) and now I'm a true freakin' believer. -- **Bryan Ramirez**.

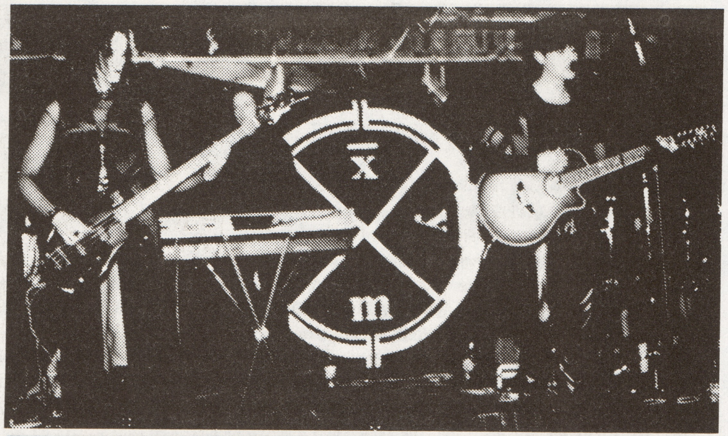
— CLAN OF XYMOX BACKSPACE —
— Labyrinth Detroit October 28 —

From their beginning in Amsterdam in 1984, **CLAN OF XYMOX** has gone on to achieve cult-like status with Goth-music lovers. Their music has been constantly changing, always challenging and, often, quite breathtaking. They have a sense of the mysterious and the inexorable. A band fired by electronic music but determined, always, to make something that is very much their own.

"I feel like we have a very unique sound; we do not sound like any number of electronic bands. I think everyone feels like they have to try to make their own music, but I think we succeed in making something that is all our own."

With that truly unique sound – at one time a mainstay on the legendary 4AD label – the band was on the road supporting their latest offering, *Creatures* [Metropolis]. It was with much enthusiasm that fans awaited their performance at Detroit's Labyrinth.

Scheduled to open was the ethereal-Goth outfit **RHEA'S OBSESSION** from Toronto. However, due to problems traveling to Detroit from Toronto, the band had to cancel their performance; this left promoters scrambling for an opening act. Detroit's Electro-industrial intellects, **BACKSPACE** answered the call. With a little over an hour to get to the club, set up and do a sound check, the trio felt plenty rushed. Arriving at the club later than anticipated, they were met with Xymox *still* doing their sound check! With only a line-check, Backspace rolled through a fierce 40-minute set of their unique Euro-tingled Electro industrial.



CLAN OF XYMOX

Lead singer **Piotr Kornblum**'s voice echoed strong emotions on "Shame", "Shadow Vision" and a new crowd pleaser, "Clean." The superior synth work was not only handled by Kornblum, but also with **Dave Stechschulte** and **Marc Church** as well. Stechschulte even provided vocal duties on the powerful "Fear" parallel to Kornblum. Backspace ended their set with a revamped version of "Sister" to strong crowd response. The band's debut CD ***Clockwork Pathogen*** is just out on the Systematic Audio Artz label. The band also did a U.S. tour with German industrial bands Das Ich and In Strict Confidence that began at the end of November. Watch these guys!

With a certain charisma and wisdom, Clan of Xymox took to the stage with **Ronny** (guitar / vocals) and **Mojca** (bass), along with what appeared to be newer tour musicians. Launching into the opener, the sound quickly became unbalanced and muddy.

Stumbling through the first song, with sound problems not yet resolved, the band blotched on their second song as well. With plenty of feedback and the drums being either too loud or too soft at points, Xymox came to a dead stop in the middle of the third song. Eventually Ronny set his guitar down and snarled at the crowd, something along the lines of "Obviously Detroit doesn't build their P.A.'s like they build their cars!"

This was a completely unprofessional display from a band that has played some of the biggest festivals in Europe (*Zilo* and ***Heaven's Gate***). The sound guys scrambled once again to remedy any problems and, eventually, Clan of Xymox returned to the stage. Starting again at the first song, the band seemed to regain what little momentum they had left. It was only until older classics such as "Louise" (from 1986's ***Medusa***) and "Stranger" (from 1985's self-titled release) that the band reverted into that near sinister, mysterious and enchanting sound. At once synths began to provide motion in the background, the drumbeats punched their way through the blanket of noise, then became swallowed by the sobering compositions. The Clan of Xymox people had come to see was finally in tact. Sadly a few people angered at Ronny's tantrum had up and left.

Clan of Xymox has that peculiar ability to transform tragedy (AKA a simple sound system fix) into their own form of elegance, as they did on this evening. Perhaps not their best show of the four times they've played in Detroit, however it was certainly an experience many will remember for their own reasons. – **Kate McEntee**.

-- THE DEL McCOURY BAND --
-- The Ark Ann Arbor November 3 --

Bluegrass music is one of the few forms where the tradition's founders still actively perform and record on a regular basis. However, many critics have bemoaned the future of bluegrass, speculating on whether it can survive once the bearers of this tradition have passed on. Those doubters need only to witness a show such as the one put on by **THE DEL MCCOURY BAND** at the Ark on November 3.

Combining the new and old guard of bluegrass music, the Del McCoury Band is led by the legendary **Del McCoury**, who honed his bluegrass chops in the '60s as a member of Bill Monroe's Blue Grass Boys. His backing band includes his sons, **Ronnie** and **Rob McCoury**, on mandolin and banjo, respectively, and is rounded out by **Mike Bub** on the stand-up bass and **Jason Carter** on fiddle. Despite being 59 years old, Del remains in his prime and this fact was certainly evident on this night (as I'm sure it is on any night). Using the traditional one microphone setup, Del and his band delighted the sold out crowd with a mixture of bluegrass standards and their own original material, focusing primarily on the songs found on their new album, ***The Family***.

The crowd appeared to be a mixture of long-time bluegrass fans and more recent converts who discovered the Del McCoury Band through their association with **Steve Earle**. They collaborated on the 1999 release, ***The Mountain***, which turned out to be one of the finest albums of that year, and in turn exposed the Del McCoury Band to a more rock-centric audience.

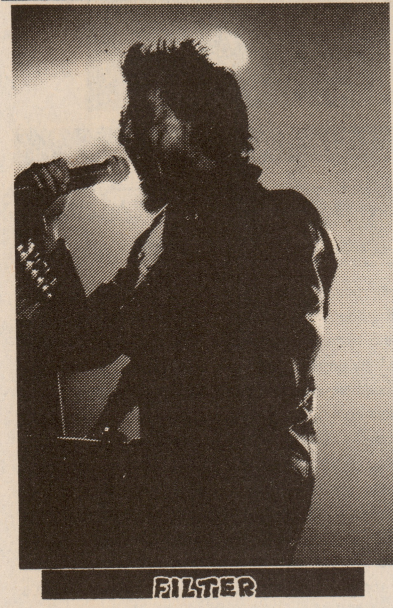
Taking the stage in dapper suits, the band led off with "A Far Cry," the opening cut from "The Family" and then followed up with a smoking rendition of Jimmy Martin's "She's Left Me Again." The band continued to work the crowd, trading solos back and forth and politely acknowledging the audience, which responded with roaring applause and whistles. The highlights of the two hour set included a stunning vocal quartet version of "Get Down On Your Knees and Pray," an old gospel song that is nearly a cappella except for small breaks of mandolin and guitar. Equally riveting was Ronnie McCoury's lead vocal take of Bill Monroe's classic "With Body and Soul."

After two encores, the show ended with Ronnie McCoury introducing the last song as "... a tune by that famous bluegrass songwriter - Bob Dylan." The song turned out to be "Walk Out in the Rain," which Ronnie and Rob recorded on their self-titled 1995 album on Rounder.

After performing professionally for nearly 40 years, Del McCoury knows how to assemble a good bluegrass band, yet none of his various lineups is as tight and diverse as his current group. Witnessing their live show reaffirmed what I had heard on their recordings - The Del McCoury band is one of the best bands performing acoustic music today. Don't miss 'em when they return! -- **D. Neal / C. M. Campbell.**

THE DEL McCOURY BAND

— FILTER DrainSTH SIMON SAYS —
— CLUTCH CARGOS PONTIAC, MI NOVEMBER 12 —



FILTER

Not long after **FILTER** rocked the *Family Values* crowd they had returned for a repeat sold out performance at Clutch Cargos. The original bill was scheduled to be Filter, System of a Down, and Staind. But they had dropped off, making for some disappointed concertgoers (some of whom did not find out until they reached the doors and saw the notes that were put up). The bill for the evening was not Filter, **DrainSTH**, and **SIMON SAYS**. Simon Says had also recently been in Detroit on the *Loudside 40oz To Boredom* tour. They played their little Sacramento hearts out. The kids ate it up. They sound like **Far** is a phrase that was heard more than once during the evening. They impressed the crowd, which is part of the opening band's job (to get the people motivated). Drain and Filter however did not (talk to the crowd too much that is). Drain, like the name says, drained the crowd. A few people who were into their music survived. The rest were nearly lifeless. They drowned through their set reminding the crowd of their new album, *Freaks of Nature*. After the set, they did a signing inside the venue (this was the first time I had seen such a thing). After which Filter took the stage. Filter had a multitude of soundboards, which took up 3x as much space as usual. Not all of these were soundboards per se. At least one of these was used to operate their light show. And what a light show it was. One can only hope that no one there was prone to epileptic seizures. Bright and boring seem to be the key words for Filter that evening. And I do mean bright. It's no wonder that there was no interaction with the crowd before the encore. For if the crowd dared to look at the stage when **RICHARD PATRICK** spoke, the light of a 1000 suns would've blinded them. When they actually *did* talk to the crowd it was a very short exchange. It was one of those, "We are gonna say something and you are going to cheer," deals with the crowd. "We don't usually do encores, but since you are such a great crowd, we're going to do one for you (insert cheer here)". Except Filter failed to elicit any enthusiastic response. For the encore they played (with a little help from some of the boys in Simon Says) the most UN-Filter sounding Filter song in their entire catalog. Take a picture. -- **Nathan Keeler.**

— IN FLAMES MOONSPELL CAULDRON —
— I-ROCK DETROIT NOVEMBER 13 —

I'm sorry, but when I entered the joint, the first band was playing and I didn't catch their name [I was talking to a new friend of mine]. Soon afterwards, **CAULDRON** came on stage, and **ZACK** and Co. did a decent job entertaining us. The set list was: "Of Reality and Premonition," "Pre-Arranged Funeral Activity," "The Birth of Chaos," "Brinkmanship" and "Seasonal Crumblings." After Cauldron, another band played, but I didn't catch their name either. No matter, to be honest, I was there only to see two bands: **MOONSPELL** and **IN FLAMES**. I'm very familiar with Moonspell, but totally ignorant of In Flames. Moonspell rocked the place; they had a bunch of their fans [all Goth looking] singing along to their songs. I liked them very much, but something seemed to be missing from their set. Perhaps it lacked a bit of energy. Maybe it was because their music sounded, at times, a bit "alternative." I don't know. Honestly, it might have been the fact that I was talking to Florian. That really distracted me, honest! Afterwards, Moonspell's drummer was cool enough to hang out and sign autographs, etc. He's very nice and spoke excellent English. I asked him to write out their set list for me, and he was kind enough to do it. The set was: "Butter Fly," "Opium," "LustMord," "Ruin and Misery," "Angelizer," "Alma Mater," "Spectator," "Wolf Shade," "Mephisto" and "Tired." The encore consisted of "Soulsick," "Second Skin" and "Full Moon Madness." Another reason why Moonspell didn't blow me away was because that was In Flame's job. I can't tell you what songs they played [I don't have any of their CD's] and I was totally unfamiliar with them [I've heard about them, but don't own any of their stuff]. I *can* tell you that I've seen God, and his name is "In Flames!" If you're into incredibly heavy, Heavy Metal, then In Flames is the band for you. They play more guitar harmonies than any band on earth. I love their music. They blew me away and I loved it! Long live In Flames! -- **Gerry Cummings.**

— PRIMUS INCUBUS BUCKETHEAD —
— STATE THEATRE DETROIT NOVEMBER 17 —

On Wednesday, November 17, a multitude of fans (many of them very drunk or very stoned by shows end) crowded their way into the State Theatre to hear the bass laden rock music styling of **PRIMUS**, the funk-laced tracks of **INCUBUS** and the assorted tomfoolery of **BUCKETHEAD**. Due to technical (running late) and linear (that long line) problems, I was unable to see Buckethead's performance. My sources tell me that when he opened he did the same stuff that he did when he came on stage with Primus. Which was doing the robot (that old school breakdancing bust a move thing), displaying his nunchuk abilities, and doing fantastic '80s guitar solos. Contrary to popular belief, I'm not hot for teacher. Incubus then took the stage. Guitarist, **MIKE EINZIGER**, marked the occasion by playing the little ditty from Close Encounters of the Third Kind. They sounded fantastic, absolutely fantastic. It's hard to believe that this was a live performance. They played many of my personal favorites off of *s.c.i.e.n.c.e.* which was nice, except they didn't play anything off of *Enjoy Incubus*. Even though they mentioned numerous times that they had a new album out, called *Make Yourself*, they hardly played anything off that album either. Incubus is a good live band because they have an energy level that stays at a constant level throughout their performance. They are not a good band for the same reason. Their level stays constant neither going up or down. Then after the brief set change and the lights went down. Amid the chants of "Primus sucks," they took the stage. Primus wooed the crowd with a bevy of classics, (such as, "My Name is Mud," "Jerry was a Race Car Driver," and "Those Damn Blue-collar Tweekers") and soon to be classics (like "Antipop"). Their light show was exactly how one should be at a concert. It accented their performance, not overpowered. -- **Nathan Keeler**

BUCKETHEAD

— CAFE TACUBA —
— THE SHELTER DETROIT NOVEMBER 19 —

CAFE TACUBA is a Mexican band that somehow managed to tour the U.S. My brother and I messed up, going to the Old Country Buffet before going, so we weren't prepared when we ended up going, getting in pretty cheap, before realizing that, "We should've brought both our regular camera and video cameras!" The place was rocking by the time we entered. They were playing their version of "No Controles." After that, it's pretty much a blur, because I was having so much fun! Everyone was jumping! The guys put on one hell of a show! What's so surprising is that they raised hell on a small stage and in such a small space (The Shelter for Chrissakes!). They played hits like "Rarotonga," "Maria," "La Ingrata," et al. During the last song, the place just went Bonkers! Everyone loves that song, including myself! We were dancing and going nuts! They also played "Alarma" and a bunch of instrumentals. No doubt about it. These guys earned my respect. They were also pretty nice, because later on they hung out to chat, signed stuff and get their pictures taken with the fans. What a difference a band makes! Last spring... when **DOGSTAR** came to town, we waited a long time for Keanu and the boys, and they never showed their faces! -- **Gerry Cummings.**

— DANZIG SAMHAIN HATEBREED AFI —
— STATE THEATRE DETROIT NOVEMBER 23 —

I'd never seen **DANZIG** live, much less **SAMHAIN**. To be honest, I wasn't planning on seeing them, but since my buddies were going, and called saying they had an extra ticket; well, it worked out that I went. The whole day pretty much went in going to see these guys! We ended up going to their signing at Harmony House, and then to the concert. I don't know... I was kind of disappointed, maybe it was because I'll have to pay back my friend, or maybe it was the fact that I didn't care much for **AFI** or **HATEBREED**. Maybe it was because Samhain was disappointing. Hell, midway through their set [actually, after only a few songs], something happened to their bass player and, after a few awkward minutes of silence and darkness, the band came back out, only now Samhain's drummer was playing bass and Danzing's drummer filled in on drums! It was surreal; to say the least, and even that set was cut short! There was one song that had started, and I could see and hear **GLENN DANZING** yelling, "Wait, wait!", but the band still went on playing. By time the song was over, Glenn was pissed off and walked off the stage. Very strange stuff. Anyway, Danzig and his band then came out, and rocked the house. But again, I was pretty disappointed. Maybe it was due to the fact that they don't have very many cool songs. Maybe God knows why? I do know that I loved "Mother," "Her Black Wings," and their new song "Five Claw Finger," or whatever it is called. I don't know. I probably would've enjoyed the show better if it had been free. -- **Gerry Cummings**.

-- THE WITCHES BANTAM ROOSTER --
-- THE GOLD DOLLAR DETROIT NOVEMBER 26 --

TROY - THE WITCHES

Up first was the fuzzed-out, reverb-drenched sound of **THE WITCHES**. Tonight they were all in their characteristic black shirt / pant look, the last time they played a few of them looked as colorful as hippies. No matter how many times I've see them, or listened to their fine CD, damned if I can ever remember a single song they play, even those I know the lyrics to. Up next, after much consultation with the local waitress, was **BANTAM ROOSTER**. They were on tonight, **TOM POTTER** sliding all over the stage assaulting the near capacity crowd with screeching drunken sloppy guitar licks, and they loved every minute of it. Standing, as I was in front of his cabinet, I was quite shocked that the loudest part of their set was drummer **MIKE ALONSO**'s static snare beats. It's always shocking to see a drummer that's that much louder then the guitar, even without the benefit of being mic'ed. However he does it nicely. Where former Bantam drummer **ERIC COOK [GRAVITAR]** rocked you with his finesse, Mike simply rears back and hits you. Playing mostly songs from the latest, ***Crosses and Switchblades***, and a few new ones due out on an A-Go-Go due out around Valentines Day [according to rumors]. The highlight for me was "Tom Skinner," it's one of their best songs. All in all, a fine night of music, even though it was just another excuse to get completely assed at the Dollar, which, the more I go there it reminds me more and more of Lansing's beloved Mac's, without the "Delta Delta Delta," wait staff. All had a fun night; but that shouldn't surprise you because Bantam was for some time Lansing's finest, and now that they reside in Motown it isn't any different. -- **P Hahn**.

KIM LENZ & HER JAGUARS 8 BALL GRIFTERS
-- MAGIC STICK DETROIT DECEMBER 1 --

The ticket stub of the concert this night claims **KIM LENZ** as "rockabilly goddess." I suppose that it wasn't too far off the mark. We'll get to that in just a moment, first... Late for another gig! I got there just in time to see the end of Michigan's own **8 BALL GRIFTERS**. **WADE**, of the Deans fame, has a new outfit going. I was able to hear the last half of an original tune, right before the 8 Ball's kicked into a cover of Johnny Cash's "Folsom Prison Blues". I'll have to catch them at another gig sometime. Next was the band we had all been waiting for... **KIM LENZ AND HER JAGUARS**. Kim was touring in support of her new record *The One and Only*. This was a fun show to be at and good gig to see. It was held on a Wednesday night, which means that the crowd was small. This means I got a good view of the show and there wasn't much to distract from the sound. Kim even mentioned part way through the set that she enjoyed the fact it was a small, well behaved crowd. Kim and her band were in good form this night. They played through a good medium paced upbeat set of songs off the new record. I don't recall which Patsy Cline song Kim performed, but she was the gal to do it. I believe she also played a song that was written for Elvis, but never recorded. It was hard to tell the original songs apart from the covers that she played. That is to say that the band plays rockabilly more like the older folks, like Elvis and Patsy Cline used to. After the show, Kim and the rest of the band were kind enough to hang around and sign records and talk with us audience members. I think she even stayed around long enough to drink with people who were willing to stick around a little longer. I guess that's what Rockabilly Goddess' do. -- **Eric Reanimator**.

KIM LENZ & HER JAGUARS

-- BUCKY DENT WANDERJARR BIGON --
-- THE GOLD DOLLAR DETROIT DECEMBER 2 --

I went to this show hoping to catch up with my ex-roommate, **COREY** of **WANDERJARR**, and I got an extra treat in addition to that. Walking up to the door I was greeted by a sign foretelling females that there's a pervert in the parking lot groping women. Once inside, I heard a vaguely familiar sound and, after asking who was playing, had my answer: one of Lansing's finest, **BIGON**. For those of you who haven't heard them yet, combine the frenzy of Mule, power sludge of the Melvins and add a bit of John Coltrane, preferably from his quintet days, and you'd have this band. Heavy melodic beats, which start off slow to draw you in and then the trap is sprung, as the band effortlessly downshifts from fourth to first leaving posi marks for a block. This is the kind of band that you meet at a club and think, "Gee, these are nice normal, sane people," then end up handcuffed to a wooden barn with a chicken up your ass, wondering why you've never tried this before. And on a personal note, drummer **COLIN** will give lap dances for $100, or so he says, but he declined to do more than take his shirt off for the $20 I offered. Up next was Wanderjarr, again from Lansing. They play some kind of groove-oriented rock, which I can't place my finger on. It's highly reliant on its rhythm section, not to say that the dual Les Paul / Marshall attack isn't important, but it's the boom and thump that drives this music. While not as violently passive / aggressive as Bygon it still switches beats with a regularity that always leaves you guessing. This is another in a small group of L-town bands that I actually enjoyed while I was employed at Mac's. They are quite possibly one of the best-kept secrets in Lansing. The headliner was **BUCKY DENT** from Chi-town. They played an aggressive, almost garage-driven, punk. At times it's heavily reliant on the keyboards and the next it's all guitar. I must confess I really enjoyed them, although I'd planned on leaving after Wanderjarr, they made me glad that I stayed. Three bands played this night and no ones showed up, mainly because none of them were big scene bands, another thing that makes this bar remind me of Mac's. Three bands to check out if you ever get a chance.
-- **P. Hahn**.

The Publisher Schmoozing with Thomas Jackson Potter

MP3.CON

Sellout of the Year Award

by CBH3

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Disregard my previous "fluff" article regarding MP3.com. Since I wrote that article, I've learned about and witnessed many changes in MP3.com. This article tells of a site that had potential and then turned corporate. In my opinion, MP3.com has become one of the most corporate, most visited, most annoying sites on the net. A site where they'll try and convince you that they're "giving" you something, and hope that you forget that you're giving them something if you upload your music to their site. A site who some insiders say was designed to build a base of indie musicians, go for the IPO and make a lot of money, then ditch the indie musicians and go mainstream.

They used to claim that they were "different" from the traditional record industry, but now they're acting more like a traditional corporate record label. They used to fight the record companies and the RIAA about the MP3 file format. Now they celebrate the signing of an MP3 band like GunBurner to a small division of Capitol Records, saying something like, "*See, you really can be a rock star by being on MP3.com!*" They don't want you to believe that the phrase "MP3.com" is a black mark on your band's resume, but many agents, managers and labels will tell you it is.

If you sign with them, you're giving them intellectual property so they can give it away for free in the form of MP3 files (compressed audio), photos, and lyrics. It's a two-way street: you're giving them free music and they're giving you web space and high volume traffic, except that high volume traffic isn't coming to your band page unless you're in the Top 40.

One of the core problems is that they don't know how to manage 270,000 songs and there's not enough genres (categories) to house all the songs in an efficient manner. They claim to have about 45,000 artists on their site [as of December 1999] and without them, MP3.com would not have any content and hence, no website. It's doubtful that they have that many unique artists, because many artists have more than one MP3c band page. Many genres have 20,000 songs in them, which means if you're a new band to the site, you'll probably get buried in a big pile of MP3.com poo.

Their business model, like many Net business models, is built on losses and trying to make up for business expenses by securing advertising deals and business relationships. This plan is flawed because even Amazon.com has yet to make a profit, even though they're selling tangible products. The IPO is the money maker for the company founders and after that, it's nothing but a losing business plan incapable of sustaining profits, especially when you are giving away unlimited amounts of "free" server space to the world...

But wait, there's more! The RIAA (Recording Industry Association of America) is suing MP3.com because they encoded 45,000 mainstream CD's and stream them to user's via the new "my.MP3.com" beam-it service if the users own the CD already. For example, pop Celine Dion's latest album (as if) into yer computer's CD player, go through all the MP3.com BS about my.MP3.com and their ibeam software and magically they load their copy of the album from their database into your private album space (on the web) so you can go to work, uninhibited by that damn Celine Dion CD (for once!) and go about your day until the boss leaves and you want to listen to that CD across the Net in streaming audio format which sounds worse than the CD unless you have a high bandwidth connection. Wow! The thing MP3.com forgot was this is a basic violation of copyright laws, according to some lawyer dudes. This reminds me of the movie "The Jerk" where Steve Martin invents the optigrab. Martin makes millions and then loses it all because everyone goes cross-eyed and sues... MP3.com reminds me of this. The letter from the RIAA kinda sums up MP3.com's decision making: "*Frankly, it's astonishing that a publicly-traded company would behave so recklessly.*"

> "I encourage everyone to pull their music from MP3.COM" – CBH3

The following is a rough timeline of events and policy changes in the MP3.com world as I remember them. The phrase "MP3c" is a short form way to spell MP3.com.

3/98: MP3.com, Inc. is incorporated in Delaware in March 1998 (even though they are based in San Diego.) Their initial purpose (though hard to document now) is to provide a community website for unsigned artists to share their music and avoid the pitfalls of the traditional music industry. Throughout '98 they build up their artist base and web site functionality.

1/99: CBH3 joins MP3c and builds a good fan base up through 8/99.

4/99: MP3c increases the size of the genre tree significantly which helps many artists find a cubbyhole to put their music in and not be lumped into huge genres anymore.

7/99: MP3c launches their IPO and the co. founders make Billions of dollars. This is the beginning of the "sellout of the year award". MP3c becomes more "corporate" with each passing month.

9/99: MP3c Bulletin Board moderator Tanya first denies and then admits to dating a member of the band Square Go who had been featured by MP3c more than once. It later turns out that she is/was also their manager. This is discussed on her own MP3c BB. Artists shout "corruption!" because the system is partial and not fair to those who don't live in San Diego and don't date MP3c employees! This starts a wave of questions regarding the choosing of featured artists and the integrity of the BB moderators.

10/99: MP3c starts "Sponsored Songs" which later becomes "Payola" and pisses off a large portion of the artist community. The new feature is an "auction" for 10 spots listed on major genre pages, so artists have to pay if they want their band's name listed on the main pages under Payola. (Later, as of December '99, MP3c hid the payola features so they're not viewable on the main chart pages. So much for paid exposure...)

10/99: MP3c removes the Top 10 DAM CD list, which takes away exposure for artists that were on the list. Many artists express discontent and stories of markedly decreased exposure and song downloads.

10/99: MP3c reports quarterly losses again and, in fact, hasn't made a profit yet. MP3c signs a deal with a French company that owns perfume maker Sephora, for $150 million in advertising. The MP3c site is so overloaded with Sephora ads that I start begging for a "punch the monkey" banner.

11/99: MP3c chops the once mighty genre tree to shreds and lumps artists into huge genres automatically. This is the "screw job of the year" because artists that were doing well in small genres get lumped into huge piles of songs where their music is no longer noticed and their downloads vanish. [This happened to me.]

11/99: "Payback for Playback" starts which seems like a "good thing" but in fact only rewards Top 40 artists with big bucks, while the average artist barely gets anything. The scheme is that the more downloads you get, the more they'll pay you. However, the total purse is $200,000 / month so the amount you get is dependent on how much others get. This is a typical MP3c ploy where you never really know if your stats are right, how much you'll really get, if they're being fair to you, etc. It's a way to further quiet the angry masses by "giving" them something.

11/99: Quoted from Yahoo Financial News (in which they quote from TheStreet.com): "*Ask not for whom the bell tolls. It tolls for MP3. In a universe filled with overvalued Internet stocks, MP3.com (Nasdaq:MPPP - news) may be the most staggering story of all. The Web-music start-up offers songs no one wants through a technology it doesn't own. Its market: anyone bored enough to rummage through the offerings of more than 30,000 artists in the hope of finding the next Celine Dion.*"

But wait, there's more. MP3.com's top executives, including Thomas Spiegel who ran a California savings-and-loan into the ground a decade ago, cost taxpayers more than $1 billion, according to regulators. Spiegel, obsessed with personal security, built two antiterrorist bomb shelters at his S&L's headquarters. A 1990 Los Angeles Times story reported that he had as many as 19 private security officers protecting him, some armed with automatic weapons. MP3.com hired Spiegel in July. He's in charge of "strategic business opportunities."

12/99: The site is redesigned so it looks like a mainstream search engine and has no featured artist list, no new songs list, or top CD lists unless you go hunting for them. A site which had potential is reduced to a mainstream portal instead of a revolutionary community of artists. The whole site is designed to make you click on more pages which allows them to show you more ad banners. It looks dull and reminds me of accounting data sheets. Chart pages that once showed 100 songs per page now only show 40 which means even more page clicks.

1/2000: MP3c starts the hilarious, yet sad, "School Spirit 2000" which is aimed at getting high school music on MP3c [as if anyone wants to hear that]. MP3c even has course outlines and planners to get Joe High School to join up and start giving away school cheers, music and, maybe, even some original music. What's next? Fisher-Price toys that look like Diamond Rio's so preschooler's can get that MP3 fever before they even know their ABC's??

2/2000: MP3c still refuses all forms of payment except credit cards. I hypothesize that they want to have a "big brother" eye on who is buying what by tracking the CC numbers with their computers.

I [CBH3] left MP3c and now encourage everyone to pull their music from MP3.com.

It's brought to my attention that even though I deleted 24 songs, there are still lyric pages by CBH3 out there on domains owned by MP3c which are easily found through a simple Yahoo search. When a user deletes songs and lyrics, they should be deleted, not still available through search engines! Other artists have claimed that it took months for MP3c to remove their songs and / or band pages after deleting them.

My membership in the MP3c feature known as the "New Music Army" nets me a whopping $3 for the month of December. The NMA is supposed to be a way for a manager to promote many bands under his or her umbrella but only gets 5% of all sales. So to make any serious money, the NMA manager's bands need to sell a lot of CD's and have 1000's of downloads to even be able to earn enough to buy each band member a new guitar pick.

MP3c starts the new my.MP3.com and beam-it services. This is the icing on the cake of "sellout of the year award" because now MP3c is trying to push mainstream music when their original intent was to provide a community for unsigned artists. As a result, the RIAA sues MP3c for copyright violations that could add up to billions of dollars.

In closing, I think MP3.com is a like the Titanic, sinking into the ocean. The RIAA may be the asteroid heading directly towards the sinking ship...

Related Links:

Online version of this article with more info and more links:

www.cbh3.com/etch/mp3.html

The RIAA web page with links to their lawsuit documents and letters to MP3c:

www.RIAA.com

The MP3c response to the RIAA letter:

www.mp3.com/response.html

HEAR

AFI **All Hallows** EP

So *this* is SoCal hardcore punk. The EP has 4 tracks that have a "Halloween" theme. There are three originals and a cover of "Halloween" by the Misfits. The cover is Ok; the originals do nothing for me. The music is too poppy and the drums are too clean sounding. I have to give this a pass. **(Nitro)** *Eric Reanimator.*

AGATHODAEMON **Higher Art of Rebellion** CD

From the back picture, I don't know if these guys want to be the next Cradle of Filth, or like the Mexican band Lord of Astaroth? I don't know? But what I do know is, while their first song is intense ("Ne Cheama Painful"), I wasn't impressed. Hopefully that will change later on. "Tongue of Thorns" gives me hope! It begins with a very sad and melodic organ "riff"... that I loved! It's an excellent vampire song! "A Death in its Plenitude" sounds like it belongs in a "Freddy Krueger" movie. "When She's Mute" is another killer song like "Tongue..." that's cool as hell! This is the type of material Agathodaemon should be doing! And what's this I hear? Actual singing by the vocalist -- cool! "Novus Ordo Sectorum" begins with an organ or a similar instrument of some sorts. It's a bit slow and with a touch of psychedelic, similar to Pink Floyd. "Body of Clay" sounds strange, but it's heavy and very cool! It features some type of Egyptian riff and excellent stop-and-go action. "Les Posedes" is another favorite. "Neovampirism" starts with a preacher, then the riffs and drums come in. "Heaven's Coffin" is last. Not bad, not bad! If you're into vampires, then I think you'll know what to do. (**Nuclear Blast America**) *Gerry Cummings.*

ALCOHOLIC ZEBRAS **A-Z** CD

I wanted to say a lot about these guys and the stupid name they chose for their band, but I won't. I will instead concentrate on the music and I can tell you that they chose the wrong song to begin their CD. It's called "The Road Home," it lacks energy and it's kind of slow. They should have put it at the end! "Rights," the second song, is also a slow and moody song. Don't get me wrong, the musicianship and the singing are top notch, but the material is not for me. Even a song with the title, "Sister Blues," gets the slow treatment. Do all of their songs lack energy? What's the deal? I threw in the towel after just 3 songs, but as I'm a professional [well, a pseudo-professional] so I'll stick it out. "Making Conversation" had potential, but it's also robbed of energy. "Cross the Line"... you know what I will say, don't you? Finally, the last song is "Durango St. Blues" and do I sense energy from the singer? Yes, but the music lacks energy! That's it, I give up. While not bad, the Alcoholic Zebras needs more energy on their record. **[Big Time]** *G. C.*

ALL GIRL SUMMER **Fun Band** 7"

Girly. As much as an easy way out that is to describe a band, and as much as it's overused, I still feel it's necessary to use the word "girly" when describing this record. This is the ultimate record to throw on when you just want to get cozy and snuggle, and / or shake your booty in your bedroom when no one's lookin'. You hear the first song, and say to yourself, "I can't believe how sweet this is..." Then before you know it, the next song comes on and it's even sweeter. Proof for brokenhearted boys everywhere that there are still nice girls out there... (**Magic Marker**) *mike dereniewski.*

ALL-TIME QUARTERBACK s/t CD EP

This is excellent. It's more than excellent; it should be the prime example of how indie-pop should be done. Seriously. All-Time Quarterback takes a minimal style of quirk pop that reflects heavily upon The Beatles, Revolver-era with a light backing of digital percussions brought on by a Casio synthesizer. And if they don't sound bouncy and happy, it's mellow and emotional, most notably on "Send Packing" and a cover of the Magnetic Field's "Why I Cry" (female vocals and all on the later). Sensitive guys all around will find an appreciation for this. (**Elsinor**) *Demangis.*

MARC ALMOND **Open All Night** CD

Open All Night is Marc Almond's first US release in almost a decade, so if his name doesn't ring a bell, his previous existence in Soft Cell probably will. Marc has been putting out solo records since Soft Cell's demise nearly 15 years ago. His subsequent releases have been a mixed bag, ranging between a few good songs and a lot of embarrassing schlock. After the greatness of Soft Cell, my expectations for Almond's solo releases had decreased tremendously. Luckily, I was still willing to give **Open All Night** a chance. With this latest release, Marc redeems his dark pop star status; **Open All Night** offers 15 songs that sparkle with bits of electronica, lounge and sultry soul. Some of the best tracks include: the excited "Black Kiss," "Almost Diamonds" a duet with Kelly Dayton of Sneaker Pimps, "My Love" a randy pop song, and the title cut. All of the tracks are laced with Marc's exquisite lyrics of dark eroticism and his trademark "male diva" vocal stylings. If you're curious about what Marc Almond's been up to lately, give **Open All Night** a listen; I don't think you'll be disappointed. **(Instinct)** *M. P.*

AMERICAN HERITAGE **Why Everyone Gets Cancer** CD

Pure instrumental guitar skronk from this trio that's very similar to the "early-mid SST / Greg Ginn sound" i.e. very guitar heavy and brilliantly performed musicianship that's a sort of an amalgamation of punk, metal and modern jazz. Normally when you think of an instrumental band, you conjure up the image of soft / background music, not a band as challenging, loud, crunchy and punishing as American Heritage. It's marvelous material from a relatively unheard of band. American Heritage and their debut, **Why Everyone Gets Cancer**, mean that there's another candidate to add to your "Rookie of the Year" ballet. Outstanding! **[Union]** *Norman Zebrowski.*

ANGRA **Fireworks** CD

From the moment I heard the first chords of Angra's "Carry On" (not included in **Fireworks**) I fell in love with the band. That's why, when Mr. Zebrowski sent me this in the mail, I flipped out! I wanted to thank him profusely! It doesn't get much better than Angra's new work; actually, Angra's new masterpiece! This CD is by now a classic CD. It is so full of epic metal. It's amazing that humans in fact participated in this CD! You'd think it was something handed to us mere mortals by the angels! I don't know what else I can say? I love the guitar work in songs like "Wings of Reality" and "Metal Icarus." The singing? What can I say about Andre Matos' singing? He is, unquestionably, the man! The guitar riffs on "Metal Icarus" are still playing in my head. Breathtaking! I've got to listen to it again. If you want to listen to another killer tune, listen to "Speed." The title says it all. I wish I could make you go out and get this. It should sell like crazy! It should go platinum! Stop buying crappy Metallica CD's and snag **Fireworks** instead. I guarantee you'll be happy. **[Century Media]** *Gerry Cummings.*

ARCH ENEMY **Burning Bridges** CD

This is considered a Swedish supergroup of metal proportions. It's got Sharlee from the awesome Witchery and, yes, it rages. Nothing's too overblown or strays off the serious thrash path. This is the speeder shit I like to deal with. It gets a little 80's metal-ish like anything else nowadays, but it holds like a bucketful of guts, swung around almost hitting your noggin'. When it does, it's a sweet pain. **(Century Media)** *Bryan Ramirez.*

THE ATOMIC BITCHWAX s/t CD

". . .And on the eighth day God created Ricky Martin and he saw that he had made a mistake so he went back, real quick, and made The Atomic Bitchwax and he saw that this made up for his mistake in spades." Dave 1:1. It's hard, heavy, fast, incredible and the most exciting thing since the MC5. I smell a fire that's about to turn into a blaze. I don't think I need say more. **[Tee Pee / MIA]** *David Lee.*

BAL-SAGOTH **The Power Cosmic** CD

The intro is called "The Awakening of the Stars". It's an appropriate song title, awakening me to the grandeur of this amazing metal band. Yes, I've heard of them before, but I can't spend all of my money buying heavy metal CDs, now can I? That's why I love writing for **ETCH**! Song number two, "The Voyagers Beneath The Mare Imbrium," has it all: keyboards, guitar harmonies (apparently?), good vocals and skillful drumming. It's all around coolness. "The Empyreal Lexicon" sounds a bit like -- forgive me for saying it -- circus music! Well, at least in the beginning. Then it gets serious, with slow parts, fast parts and epic keyboard riffs. "Callisto Rising" sounds like another amazing epic and it's a bit like "The Final Countdown" by Europe. But just a bit! As I listen to it, I hear the lyrics and read the song titles. I wonder if it's some type of a concept album, but without the song lyrics I can't go further into it. The seventh song, "Behold, The Armies of War Descend Screaming From The Heavens" is another epic. Finally, the last song, "The Thirteen Cryptical Prophecies of Mu," continues the apocalyptic epic, which is the grand **The Power Cosmic**. (**Nuclear Blast**) *Gerry Cummings.*

BECK **Midnight Vultures** CD

I care not if his video is on *VH1*; Beck is one funky little white man. His latest effort harkens back to the '70s with the advent of Parliament, Afrika Bombada [sp.?] and Kraftwerk. It doesn't matter if you're down with hip-hop, electro, or what have you, **Midnight Vultures** is a mix of just about everything one can imagine and just may appeal to everyone. 2 snaps up and a booty shake for this guilty pleasure. (DGC) *R. Overmyer.*

BEOWULF SCANTRON TEST / UTAH s/t split 7"

If there were ever a couple of bands from Kalamazoo to go see, these are the ones. Not only is it the only place to get his 7", but they also put on a good shows. Utah is a superbly unique band and has a great head for music on their shoulders. Ed, their vocalist / guitar player, is a fabulous musician and composes imaginative and spacey tunes. They're well layered with a cello and spew indie. Their co-conspirators, Beowulf Scantron Test are almost equally notable. Sorry guys, but the lack of a bass guitar bugs me. It's not that I'm so traditional that I can't break from the typical guitar / bass / drums combo; I love the bass sound and find it irritating when there's nothing to fill out the bottom. I do, however, enjoy the song. I'm looking forward to new, full-length releases by both of these bands and you should too. **[Soviet]** *Danny Vendetta.*

BIS **Social Dancing** CD

Social dancing as opposed to social drinking? Bis is just plain fun, their breed of punk punk-pop is so damn catchy, combining alterna-pop melodies with the craziness of the B-52s and Rezillos. "The Hit Girl" is a good example of the Rezillos' influence. I laughed listening to Mandy Rin complain about her killer job and boss. Is "Making People Normal" a macho Mrs. Robinson song or a song about transvestites? "*Mommy was a model back in 1983 before skinny girls invaded the industry. She was Dustin Hoffman but she's not much of a Mrs. Robinson.*" The woman in question is definitely hotter than Hoffman's Tootsie. "*You're looking good for your age, looks like you stepped off the page.*" Her "I'm A Slut" and proud of it anthem suggests flaunt it if you got it. She wears a see-through-blouse with her boyfriend's approval. "Eurodisco" sounds like Duran Duran, poking fun of Eurotrash. "Action & Drama" continues the 80's sound, commenting on pop music in general: "*Pop music is not going to die. It just needs a new direction.*" I swear the male vocalist reminds me of Glen Tilbrook of Squeeze. "Sale Or Return" is like hip-hop Squeeze. Bis point out some clever paradoxes. In "Shopaholic" they denounce the consumer culture without denying its addictive qualities. It reads like a lyrical shopping list asking, "What will I buy today?" "Sale Or Return" takes on the whole issue of pre-planned obsolescence. "Detour" is a queer metaphor set to a Beastie Boys' rap. "*Do you want to go my way?*" "Theme From Tokyo" is an orchestrated number with koto-like guitar plucking. The song shows off their soundtrack music potential, which should be easy as they already do the "Power Puff Girls" cartoon-closing theme. **[Grand Royal]** *Allen Salyer.*

BITCHY **Black Socks & Happiness** CD

Good thing the music is a lot better then their band name. Bad tempered, straight up punk that doesn't go near the progressive, experimental route, sort of like Black Flag pre-Rollins era -- sure they can play their instruments, but do they have to show it off on eight-minutes-long songs? Thankfully, this side-band doesn't sound anything like the full-time band of The Blue Meanies, that three out of the four members involve themselves in; that's all the world needs, another one of those "wacky" ska bands. (**Thick**) *Demangis.*

BRANT BJORK **Jalamanta** CD

Former Drummer for Kyuss, Bjork's solo album contains a lot of heavy, thudding, stoner rock mixed with a laid back feel. Although I've listened to the CD several times, it didn't leave an impression on me. If you like Earth, the Melvins or heavy, slow rock, this should be right up your alley, otherwise forget it. **(Mans Ruin)** *Eric Reanimator*

BLANKS 77 **C.B.H.** CD

You want Gutter-Punk rock? Here you go. There's nothing that impressive except for the fact that it's really, really punk. You've got your political statements, your societal statements and, of course, your drinking songs. Some are fast, some are slow, but they do rock. Personally, I think Mike Blank's voice could irritate a tree into uprooting itself if exposed for too long. That snotty, pissed, high-pitched snarl is like nails on a chalkboard, but if you listen to it enough, you could get used to it, I guess. I didn't like this album when I first heard it (probably because it sounds like every other Blank's recording, but with good quality). Now I can say that I don't hate it. I'm thinking one would have to be a big fan to really enjoy this album, and I, a fan, truly would. I can't get into it that much. It has, however, made it to my big-ass disc carrier which means I'll listen to it from time to time for either a change of pace or to compliment a really pissed off mood. **[Radical]** *Danny Vendetta.*

BLIND GUARDIAN **Nightfall in Middle Earth** CD

I finally got a CD by Blind Guardian! I have heard so much about these guys. I mean, the guys from Helloween and Gamma Ray do nothing but praise this band. I realize why: they kick ass! There are lots of dual guitar harmonies going on. Pretty cool stuff. Unfortunately, I bought a CD too much into "folk" stuff. I don't know, it might be a "concept album." Anyway, I like this CD. My favorite songs are: "Into the Storm," "Nightfall" and "When Sorrow Sang." Don't get me wrong, I like the whole album... but these songs just "sing" to me. **(Century Media)** *Gerry Cummings.*

BLINKER THE STAR **August Everywhere** CD

Jordan Zadorozny sounds like early Brian Eno vocally and is influenced by early pop music. You can hear it in "Crazy Eyes," his homage to an ex-girlfriend. At other times a Beatles' influence comes through, as in "Pretty Pictures," a song about creative people who tend to block out others when they are creating, even loved ones. "September Already" does not want August to end (thus the album's title), savoring the best time of the year. The wobbly guitars convey a sense of an unnecessarily complicated world in "Below Sliding Doors," suggesting doors are the opening to a trap that may have no escape. "I Am A Fraction" is about people who live vicariously though television, films and books instead of actually living. "*I could watch it at the movies.*" When the Hudson's building imploded last year, I went downtown to witness the destruction. I'll never forget how many people acted like they experienced it because they watched it on TV. Zadorozny is good at studying neurosis. "There's Nowhere You Can Hide" examines a couple living together, each one addicted to a different drug. "The Star Behind The Star" looks at the Heaven's Gate mass suicide and the charismatic leader with self-destructive tendencies phenomenon. The tragedy is they take down so many with them, not just themselves. "Your Big Night Sandy" is a catty tune about a woman who thinks her experiences are exclusive to her. She's always hustling to get some sort of project together and her real name is not Sandy. Knowing his history, I suspect he's talking about Courtney Love. I like what Zadorozny has to say, just not the way he says it, the way he rhymes lines, the forced lyricism, the repeating "oh-ho-oh" at the end. It's obvious he's literate listening to "Right Kind Of Girl" which refers to Grimm's fairy tales, how they're horrifying and yet fascinating at the same time and "Strange As They Say," which is based on the Aleister Crowley novel "Diary Of A Drug Fiend," but I just can't seem to make the connection. **[DreamWorks]** *Allen Salyer.*

CAKE LIKE

BLONDIE Live CD

This is about the best live album / best of I've heard in long a wheel. I was a latecomer to the Blondie bandwagon back in the day, dismissing them back in '79 / '80 as merely a "new wave band," rather than the great band they were [are]. No, it took me until '83 or '84 when I finally caved, and I've been a staunch supporter ever since. There's already been a "Best of..." that was released in the '80s, but this CD was recorded last year and sounds great. Debbie Harry's voice has lost a lot of range in the interim, but she's still a broad that can belt 'em out with the best of them. This CD features the original line up regrouped, while giving us 16 of their hits, both old and new material. Plus, there's a bonus track: the theme from the ABC series "Snoops" [featuring the provocative Gina Gershon grrr], their classic "One Way Or Another." This CD is as the cliché says, "a must have." So get on down to your local record shop and snag this ASAP. **[Beyond / BMG]** *Norman Zebrowski.*

BLUE HAWAIIANS Savage Nights CD

Blue Hawaiians are masters of tiki lounge-surf-twang guitar, although they prefer the name "Exotica Noir." Inspired by Jim Thompson's gritty crime novel "The Blue Hawaiians." Mark Fontana fronts the band; his vocal style is reminiscent of Chris Isaak and Roy Orbison. The band's real asset is guitarist Mark Sproull. His wild string bending and heavy reliance on the tremolo bar give the songs added energy and stamina. "Savage Night" opens like the theme to "Dragnet," before cascading into a night-stalking private detective movie soundtrack. The instrumental, "Experiment In Terror" finds them street walking in dark alleys. Probably the best surprise is the smooth, slow motion version of "Shakin' All Over," as Fontana croons his way through the song. I love the way the song falls apart at the end with loads of tremolo madness. There are lots of songs about cheatin' women and giving up your soul for cheap sex. The lyrics aren't about endless summers but endless temptations. Their version of Henry Mancini's "Highlife" is full of sax and sex. Eve and the playboy highlife tempt Adam. Check out Janiva Magness' gospel-inspired vocals, she's sensational. Another fun cover is the "Tom Waits on a binge" song "Jockey Full Of Bourbon." The song "Trouble Boy" features Mexican trumpet and Spanish guitar. "Hot Rods To Honolulu" has circular bass and brisk hot-rodding guitar twang. There are two hidden tracks as well, a throw away Wurlitzer organ instrumental and the fun "Swing Hula" combining swing with surf. **[Coolsville]** *Allen Salyer.*

THE BOBBYTEENS Live Fast And Rock N Roll CD
THE TRASH BRATS Must Be The Cocaine 7"

Figures, as soon as I buy something on vinyl ['cause I can't find it on CD] here comes the CD version for free. Not that I'm annoyed, this is as good, as "Glam-punk" gets. If you're a Detroiter think the Trash Brats. High-paced bubblegum pop mixed with aggressive Ramones'-style punk rock. Tunes like "Hot City Boy," "Young and Crazy," "Rock N Roll Show" and "Have Fun," all seem to prove that The Bobbyteens, a mostly female group from San Francisco, was the shite back in the day. This is a re-release from the early 90's, if my vinyl version is telling the truth, as is the press kit. I'd say a modern day version of this band would be the Donnas. Female angst, combined with fast flashy guitars and token Japanese; what could be better to describe Glam-punk. If you already have the hard to find on vinyl version, get this CD, as you'll eventually wear the vinyl down, experience speaking folks. At some point you'll want something like this in your collection. If you like big hair, gaudy make-up and more fun than a squirrel in your pants [even without betting], this album and its music in general will make you happy. Now on to Detroit's crown princes of Glam-punk: the Trash Brats. Do dresses, big hair and loud punk music (sound like your dream date?) You'll get all that and more from the Brats. For years I've heard the big bad rockers, some of whom actually rock pretty hard, razz this band for dressing in drag. And you know what? I'm starting to realize that most of them are simply jealous because they can't rock half as hard as this band. Not only does this band rock hard, they're also hardworking. Ever since they began, you can't go anywhere anymore without seeing something about this band, from their Club Beelzebub at Lil's 21in Hamtramck, as cool as anything else to do on a Sunday night [every week and far more exciting than seeing Pistol Pete play the same three sets he's been doing since '95 at 5th], to ads for their other shows or new swag. This band doesn't get the credit it deserves, and wrongly so. They plain out rock, plus seeing Brian show a little thigh is enough to turn anyone on; the music is incredible. I mean here's a local [Detroit] band that regularly plays with Kevin K. and Jeff Dahl, and generally does more for other bands than just about anyone and they get no respect. Their brand of punk is as snarly and snotty as any of the youngins play, but far better. This band has had the same lineup for ages [early 90's if memory serves]. We have bon-a-fide punk legends playing all the time, ready to talk to anyone who approaches them and the rockers are afraid. If you don't already own this, you're missing the lament anthem of the late 90's, "It's The Cocaine," about guys not scoring, and, sadly, pretty accurate. The b-side is an incredible Zero Boys cover -- when was the last time you heard of that band? Buy this if you like: The Dead Boys, The New York Dolls, early Slade, T Rex or Johnny Thunders. This band is Detroit's version of The Teenage Frames and we all know I gave my best album of the year / most important band of the year to them. **(Estrus) (I-94 Recordings)** *Paul Hahn.*

BOTANICA Malediction CD

Almost schizophrenic, this 15-track CD has 2 sides to it. It goes from being an above-average CD to a *great* CD, starting with the sublime cover of Ray Davies' "Fancy" straight through until the end, the bonus track, a muted version of the opening track, "Malediction." This trio, headed by Paul Wallfisch, plays a mix of styles from dreamy lounge-pop to unsettling ballads that hit their marks. Imagine a mixture of Nick Cave & the Bad Seeds, Leonard Cohen, Mick Harvey and The Tindersticks. Sophistication all the-way-round that one rarely hears in the music business these days. Special guests include Daniel Ash, Daniel Glass and [not surprisingly] Kid Congo Powers. This is an excellent record [the best Checkered Past has released in a long time] that will get many plays. **[Checkered Past]** *Norman Zebrowski.*

BOXCAR SATAN Days Before The Flood CD

Several times, while listening to this CD, I had to remind myself that it wasn't Six Finger Satellite, because they sound *a lot* like them. They replaced the analog synths with more traditional instruments such as: saxophones, piano and a harmonica, giving it a more bluesy sound. Make no mistake though; these guys are a definite Texas version of 6FS. All in all, **Days Before the Flood** is a well-recorded, skillfully composed record. All of the instrumentation is exceptionally distinct and non-muddied. Singer / guitarist Sanford Allen's vocals remind me of a "Southern" John Bigley (The U-Men), and the songwriting and musicianship is extremely well done, from people who obviously know their trade. They also do a simian version of Screamin' Jay Hawkins "Feast of the Mau Mau." Dig It. **[Compulsive]** *Tom Muth.*

JEREMY BOYLE Songs from Guitar Solos CD

Jeremy Boyle [Joan of Arc] offers an ambient solo album that really doesn't sound much different than your generic minimalist ambient record. What's more interesting is how the tracks are produced, by manipulating 70's guitar riffs, made popular during the conception of ambient music, to unrecognizable bleeps and blops. If intrigued by "concept" albums, this may just be right up your alley. Move over Richie Hawtin, here comes some competition. **(Southern)** *R. O.*

BRAINIAC'S DAUGHTER Behave CD

Brainiac's Daughter is built around the sex appeal of their redheaded vocalist Kristy Jo Haima. The band was named after a Dukes of Stratosphere (XTC) song written by Andy Partridge. The Tampa based electro-rock outfit uses sci-fi keyboards; power ballad chording for a slick Eurosound while singing songs of warped love. I read some reviews comparing Haima's voice to Shirley Manson, but I can only hear it on "Take It Over." That's more to the vocal phrasing than the voice itself. The opener, "Give Myself To You," starts out with disco cymbals and synth-pop trickery; then, when you're finally comfortable, they call in the loud guitars as she makes the charge, "*indifference attracted you.*" You can feel the fear in "Feel It Inside." "Fever" is the band's most polished song, as it was their first single. The song is hot and I love the way she sings "Fe-ver." He's her pirate; she's his treasure, "*use me for persuasion.*" "Infected" is very percussive with rolling bass. Haima's voice stands out against the beats singing, "*When desire becomes an illness. Infect me with your love, nurse me back to sickness.*" "Love Be Love" is about the power of love. **Behave** has sustained guitar on the "rollercoaster highway." The last two songs are, by far, the best. On "Angry Love," Haima sings about using drugs to kill the pain of breaking up. "Look At You" is the highlight of the album with guitarist Christopher Skogen's searing 4-minute guitar solo. **[Redline]** *Allen Salyer.*

BUCK Buck In Black CD EP

Corky Pigeon (d), Pepper Berry (g / v) and Lisa Marr (v / b) pound out a live studio EP in true indie fashion. It's a studio recording, with a "live" flavor, because there was no overdubbing or post-production mixing involved. Dave Phillips added rhythm guitar on the recording gives it a fuller sound. Other Buck releases could, all too easily, be labeled "pop / punk," but this release would be better suited under the "balls out rock" category. Short and sweet, it's a bit faster, mixing good-time song writing with a dash of aggression, and a whole lotta passion... **[Lance Rock]** *mike dereniewski.*

CAKELIKE Goodbye, So What CD

So, what does the "Viva Variety" actress / comedian, Kerri Kinney, do when she's not making people laugh? She plays bass and sings in Cakelike with Nina Hellman (guitar) and Jody Seifert (drums). Darlings of New York City, Cakelike rely on sinister chords, evil lyrics and buzzing guitars to expose you to the culture of the Big Apple. In "Lucky One," she is witness to a shooting... a typical day in New York. "Blacked Out And Blue" reveals an upper-income family daughter's deadly self-destructive secret. "*She likes the finer things. Mother buys her diamonds rings. She only sticks needles between her toes.*" A faulty plane in "Frequent Flyer" is going down fast, but her only concern is "Will I be remembered?" "Ashley" finds her pleading with her sister not to become like her; too many late nights, too many lost panties. "My Guy" uses automobile metaphors to tell us what a great lover her boyfriend is. There's a couple of love lost songs, like the ex-boyfriend lament "Dead To Me" and "I Miss You." "*How can you live without me?*" she seems to be asking, I was the night light in your sleep keeping you safe. "Swell" has the weirdest percussion, sort of a "metalized" dripping sound. It was a hell of a time, a Dante's Inferno of electronic noise in the vein of Can or Neu. Cakelike certainly take advantage of the every day bizarreness of the Big Apple. [*For more band info checkout: www.cakelike.com – Ed.*] **[Vapor]** *Allen Salyer.*

CAPTAIN CHEWIE & THE SPACE CADETS s/t CD

This is pretty sloppy, energetic ska-punk. Sure, these guys would rock the basement party out to the extreme. The four tracks here are good, but left me asking, "And?" Can't wait to hear more. **(Demo)** *Fike.*

LORI CARSON Stars CD

Lori Carson's fourth album will put the goose hairs-on-your-stones in knots, and grab the ol' jewels themselves like two clams pinched in salad tongs. That's if you've ever been in a relationship that's gone south quicker than the stock market in Russia -- on a good day. There are no casual throwaway lines here. No uninspired musicianship either. It's emotive; all tissue and sinew, and, unlike Meredith Brooks and Alanis, Lori doesn't take the scraps of her life and deliberately weave them into songs aimed at topping the charts. **Stars** is her most poignant, neurotic and sexually charged (in some mysterious and perverse way) album, next to her sophomore effort. It's far more focused than her last record (see "16 Days" and "Breathe"), which seemed over-produced. Carson weaves amphetamine-choked hip-hop beats with cryptic acoustic guitars and bone-scrapping chamber violins. The final chapter in her departure from Anton Fier and his on-going Golden Palominos project, **Stars** is a gorgeous candidate for album-of-the-year honors. **(Restless)** *Bob Toole.*

CATCH 22 Washed Up CD EP

It's obvious that their label mates are influencing this ska band. As members of the Victory family, I'd say that, for once, it's the ska band and not the hardcore bands that are the black sheep of the family. They went from a ska / punk format to a hardcore / ska format. I think I can say that it's a step in the right direction, and that more can be done with the blend. Unfortunately, Catch 22 hasn't quite hit the mark; it's a little shaky yet. I'm a big fan of album #3 (out of 4), Hard To Impress. This is a great blend of ska and hardcore. Yet they insisted on doing a cover of Don McLean's "American Pie." This is more of a throwback to ska from a couple years ago; doing cheesy covers, but making it part ska and part punk. The last track on this EP is a waste. I confirmed it with the guys that it's a joke, but it's not good and a waste of disc space. Instead of putting a decent song, they chose to make fun of their label mates with a mock-hardcore song. Not a good idea. Some of those guys are big and mean and I wouldn't go so far as to make fun of them, but then again I'm not a fan of pain. By the way, there are some excellent live songs hidden on the end of the CD. I think they prove to be better than the bulk of what's actually listed as legitimate tracks. **[Victory]** *Danny Vendetta.*

CATERWAUL Killer Fish CD

Whether or not you like Caterwaul depends wholly on whether or not you like Betsy Martin's vocals. Possessing a rough country croon, some people criticize her for living up to the band's name. Too quirky, too weird, too screechy. Me, I like her voice. I think it's quite original, which might explain my attraction when I first heard them over a decade ago. Another asset is guitarist Mark Schafer who leans on the tremolo bar like a good friend, warping as many notes as possible. Martin picks up the mandolin in the solo effort "Dozens Of Roses" singing, "*Heed the call, the good of reason.*" You can really hear the power and frailty of her voice. I'm not sure about the goofy hippie lyrics of "Flower King:" "*They call you the flower king because everyone blooms when you pass by*" but I do like the repetitious line "*I am the poet who is not the poet.*" The album's best song is the blissfully painful "Melancholy Holler." **Killer Fish** may not be as good as Pin & Web or Portent Hue, but it's been over 7 years since their last recording. I think it's great to hear them again. **[Lost Arts Productions]** *Bob Toole.*

THE CAUSTIC POP! From Turmoil's Soil CD

Amazing debut from East Lansing, MI-based Caustic Pop! I've heard it was 2 to 3 years in the making, and let me tell you, it was well worth the wait. Super crisp production enhances the music / vox, while the frustrated / lovesick / love struck lyrics are heard loud and clear. Singer / guitarist Chris Baratono's voice has an excellent range - both high and low - while his lyrics are well thought out and seemingly genuine. Again, about the music, the excellent musicianship, along with its 2-guitar attack is similar to the Afghan Whigs, sans the 60's soul influences. Standout tracks include: "Maybe I'm a Fool," "A Tourniquet in Need..." and "Little Black Boxes." It warms my heart knowing there's an excellent pop band in East Lansing. These gents should be huge. *Norman Zebrowski.*

CHAINSUCK Kindly Please Stop for Me CD

Kindly Please Stop for Me is the second release from Chainsuck, a Boston-based alternative band that manages to dodge labels like industrial, electronica and Goth, by playing music that is purely their own. "Pornstar" opens the record with a cold, bombastic track that adds touches of beauty to carry the chorus. The tracks that follow are very good songs that veer off in moody and brooding directions, but Marydee Reynolds' vocals have such a range they never leave the listener bored. A sad note is attached to this recording, in that the late William Tucker [of Revolting Cocks fame] did much of the programming that added to the richness and maturity of the Chainsuck sound. A very competent release that alternative music fans with a penchant for dark tension filled pop should seek out. **(TVT)** *Mike Pfeiffer.*

THE CHUBBIES She Wanted More 7"

I know The Chubbies have been around for a while, but this is my first expose to them. They kind of remind me of a Crucial Taunt / Muffs hybrid. This is definitely worth checking out. Not earth shattering, but not dry as a well either. The lyrics, which tend to be really stupid, work out pretty well on this 7". They're not over-emphasized and there's enough variation in the singing style to keep it interesting. **[Mutant Pop]** *Tom Muth.*

COMET GAIN Tigertown Pictures CD

This CD has some real good stuff on it, and some pretty mediocre stuff. The rest is kind of boring. Case in point, when you come back, I'll feel like Jesus coming off the Cross. On top of a narcoleptic beat, there's an almost inaudible guitar. I'm certainly no expert on vocal stylings, but it sounds like their singers were out of key. Still, there are definite saving points on this CD. "Hate Soul" is a great, upbeat, early-60's style rock-n-roll song. If you like other bands that KRS puts out, like Deerhoof or The Peechees, you'll probably like this CD. **[Kill Rock Stars]** *Tom Muth.*

CONTROL DENIED The Fragile Art of Existence CD

Chuck is back! Ex-Death vocalist / guitarist is back with an amazing prog / metal band. Noticed I said "prog"? Well, with Steve DiGiorgio, that's exactly what you get. This is a different style of metal, to say the least. It's hard for me to pinpoint a favorite song, because I'm keen on all of them. It's also nice to hear a good singer play with Chuck for a change. I mean, Chuck did a hell of a job with Death, but we know his range was limited to pretty much growling. But with Control Denied, we have an all-around winner! Long live Control Denied, Chuck and Heavy Metal! **[Nuclear Blast]** *Gerry Cummings.*

CORE The Hustle is On CD

As the music begins, I think of Black Sabbath, Alice Cooper, and The Rolling Stones. Why, you ask? It's because the music seems somewhat like doom metal. The guitar leads and harmonies sound like Cooper's and the vocals remind me a bit of Mr. Mick Jagger's. I don't know why! I guess this music is becoming popular in the advent of people like Monster Magnet. It's pretty good, but not quite my style. Maybe I need to smoke pot as the snail is doing in the back cover artwork of their CD. Maybe. **[MIA / Tee Pee]** *G. C.*

CREMATORY Act Seven CD

I'm not too familiar with Crematory, but from the name of the album, I'm guessing this is their seventh album. [Am I right?] It takes awhile for the real first song, "I Never Die," to start. It's somewhat heavy and moody. I liked the heavy guitar parts. "Moonlight" is a cool title for the third song, as the music does remind me of moonlight. It'd be the perfect song for a werewolf movie. I can hear this song playing while a werewolf is running from its hunters. I love it. Actually, I can even see a video of it. It's a very cool song. The vocals sound far in the past. There are two songs that are very heavy, except for a couple of parts: it's great to hear that someone can actually sing. "Fly" sounds like a 1980s song in the beginning, before the heavy stuff begins. Yeah, I definitely think that the guys from Dark Forest would've loved if I had given them this CD, but no, I kept it for myself. I *had* to review it. And it's been a pleasure so far. I loved the guitar parts of "Memory" and I loved the piano of "The Holy One." It's a very cool song. God, I almost feel like I should say something else about Crematory, but without lyrics included, what else can I say? Except... go get this CD! **[Nuclear Blast]** *Gerry Cummings.*

CRIMSON GLORY Astronomica CD

It was about time for Crimson Glory to come back! And, yes, are they back! This new CD sounds a bit like their best album, Transcendence. I am glad they left behind the shitty music they did on The Strange and the Beautiful (or whatever the title was). This CD begins appropriately with a song called "March to Glory"...which yes! It's a triumphant opener for CG and this CD. It's heavy, but still has great guitar harmonies! "War of the Worlds" continues the heaviness and the guitar harmonies. While listening to this, I'm reminded of something: I wish CG went overboard with their guitar harmonies like In Flames does. Wouldn't that be kick ass? Anyhow, talking about guitar harmonies, "New World Machine" has its share of them. "Astronomica," the fourth song, is a bit slower...at least at the beginning. Sounds slightly Egyptian. "Edge of Forever" sounds like the album's ballad. "Touch the Sun" is another folkie, Egyptian-sounding ditty. Since I love the heavier stuff, I skip the slower material and go to "Lucifer's Hammer," a more hard rock and guitar heavy song. "The Other Side of the Midnight" is song number 8. Is this a jab at CG's ex-singer, Midnight? I don't know, so I jump to the next song, "Cyber Christ," which starts with electronic sounds. The album's closer is another slow song called "Cydonia," a very nice ballad. I don't know what else to say, but I will say this, I hope that CG doesn't take nearly 10 years to release their next album. Remember, people forget too easily. Look at what's happened to Def Leppard, Guns n' Roses and others! **(Spitfire)** *G. Cummings.*

BRANDON CRUZ Eddie is a Punk CD

Former child star-turned-punk, Brandon Cruz (formerly of Dr. Know [*who I played with in '84, ed.*]) showcases his singing and rise to fame, starting with recordings from his career, including four versions of the song, "Best Friend," from the TV show "The Courtship of Eddie's Father" which Cruz starred on. The rest of the recordings are from the various hardcore punk outfits that Cruz has played in over the years. The tracks from the TV part of Cruz's life are more of a novelty item (and the sound quality is far from good on some of them), the rest of the songs are pretty good 80's LA hardcore. They have the right mix of drive and melody. Over all a nice disc for fans of 80's hardcore. **(Taang!)** *Eric Reanimator.*

DANCE HALL CRASHERS Purr CD

Much more produced than most of their past stuff. It's very "un-ska," poppy and rock. "Setting Sun" sounds like a Fastbacks' song DHC decided to cover, but works. The middle of the CD gets lost in that next-big-girl-band (even though only the singers are girls) schlock. "Nothing Left To Say" is vintage DHC; with its staccato verses and beautifully harmonized refrains. "Won't Be The Same" continues along the same vein. "Cricket" wraps the CD album up nicely with an acoustic love-type song. The fact that **Purr** seems so contrived and aimed at the mall-crowd pisses me off to no end, but hey, when it's good, it's good. I can ignore the other five or six songs. **(Pink & Black)** *Fike.*

DARK TRANQUILLITY Projector CD

There's very serious gothic / black metal oozing with ethereal keyboards and these orchestral overtones. I hate music. **(Century Media)** *Bryan Ramirez.*

JULIA DARLING Figure 8 CD

Julia Darling is a beautiful woman with a beautiful voice. I love her quiet tone of voice and the neat way she pronounces words to get them to rhyme. Think Tori Amos with a guitar instead of a piano. I'm not sure if her music falls in the "Christian rock" arena, but the lyrics impart spiritual themes. "Overloading God" calls to angels and saints for relief, asking for help, and asking what God's plan for her might be. She's burdened and questioning her faith. Powerful guitars carry her voice to higher heights. "Bulletproof Belief," confirms her unshakable faith. She wants no divine intervention, no miracles; no signs because she is firm in her belief. "*Is he around when the world is wailing? Is he around when I am failing? There is no divine intervention here, just a girl with bulletproof belief.*" Of course, she still has human foibles to overcome. She suffers sibling rivalry ("26/23"), the desire for revenge ("Bury You") and trouble suppressing lust ("Soak Me"). She also has a fear of tripping over her own feet ("Crinolines & Waltzing") as it applies to life. There's a fine line between being preachy and being firm in your belief; I think Julia Darling conveys her spirituality without proselytizing. For more info go to: www.juliadarling.com **[Wind-Up Entertainment]** *A. S.*

DAMA 2000 A.D. CD

This is an alternative band playing very heavy music -- well somewhat heavy, anyway. I don't know... I'm not really crazy about this, especially after listening to "Wecky", which sounds too much like Jane's Addiction... a band I never got into. **(Eterniti)** *G.C.*

DANZIG 6:66 Satan's Child CD

Danzig is back, with an album that some of my buddies love. The only song I liked was the first track, "Five Finger Crawl." The rest of the songs didn't have the same energy or catchiness as the first. Where's the great songwriting of the old Danzig? Maybe Glenn needs someone like John Christ! I mean Danzig needs another hit like "Mother." Anyway, if you're a Danzig fan, why the hell are you doing reading my review? Don't get me wrong, this album is way better than 5..., but it's not a classic. But then again, that's my opinion. Now, if you were to talk to my pals they'd tell you that this is Glenn's best! So who's right? You better decide for yourself. **[Evil Live]** *Gerry Cummings.*

DEADBOLT Voodoo Trucker CD

The self-proclaimed "Scariest band in the world" is back. Deadbolt, however, isn't just any band, they're storytellers with a soundtrack. **Voodoo Trucker**, Deadbolt's fifth album, is exactly the story that the title says it's about: voodoo and truckers. Deadbolt's music gives us what one might expect from these fellas. The same reverb soaked, eerie / creepy surf music that filled their previous albums. It

DEADBOLT

sounds like Dick Dale-meets-Link Wray. But the music isn't as important as the epic story of this album. As mentioned, it's about truckers. This isn't just truckers driving cross-country and stopping at nudie bars. Deadbolt tells us stories about truckers who snap after one long-haul too many, truckers who get cut off by yuppies in SUVs and seek revenge, one truck driver who picks up a rather psychotic hitchhiker and much more lunacy. The song "Truck Driving SOB" is a bit of a summary of the whole trucker lifestyle. Its clever lyrics let us peek into the mind of where truckers go and what sort of things they encounter on a day to day basis, this all through the eyes of Deadbolt. From chicken fried steak to $5 showers to CB jokin' and back to "Thelma and Louise hatin'", the song "Truck Driving S.O.B." tells us what trucking is all about. Songs like "Roadside Cross" and "Lone Highway" explore the darker side of truck driving, while songs such as "The Mocker" and "Whereabouts Unknown" are much more of the comedy bent. In fact, "Whereabouts Unknown" is a guide to CB jargon, for those of us who don't know it. I bet you didn't know there was a code for the phrase "She's gone gongwipdu" or "That waitress just dumped pot of hot coffee on my friggin' lap." Current Deadbolt fans will be pleased with this record. New fans looking for somewhere to start in on the Deadbolt craze...I'd suggest starting with their album Tijuana Hit Squad. **Voodoo Trucker** is consistent with the sound and image Deadbolt has employed over the years, so there aren't any real surprises on this. Sorry kids, there's no song in the "Patches the Clown" saga on this record. I recommend this to Deadbolt fans everywhere, and fans of scary surf / garage rock. Hippies beware! **(Cargo / Headhunter)** *S. Peterson.*

DEALS GONE BAD Overboard CD

There really isn't that much that stands out with this band or this album. That's not to say that I don't like it, there's just not a lot of flare. If one is interested in typical reggae / ska, this is definitely an album for that kind of pallet. **Overboard** is exactly what you'd expect from a Moon records band that plays reggae / ska. Nothing fast, nothing creative. Basically, one of the reasons this kind of music and the biggest supporting label went into recession. There's nothing to differentiate them from any of the other reggae / ska bands and they stick with the same tired formula that's in desperate need of either a facelift or a good booting. Yes, Deals Gone Bad is a good band and they'd be very enjoyable as background music at a party or a pub, but not a band to get excited about and nothing worth going out and buying. **[Moon]** *Danny Vendetta.*

THE DERITA SISTERS ...Ain't Street CD

No, they aren't street; they're retarded. If these guys are supposed to be a joke, they're not funny. If they're supposed to be serious, they suck. This band really needs to quit doing this now. I believe they're supposed to be a joke band, but the jokes are on them. They aren't funny in the slightest. They pull out this crap about how black people hate whites and want them dead and name a few celebrities that feel this way... Like countless bad comedians haven't done it already. Aside from not having a good sense of humor, The Derita Sister also lack a good sense of music. The entire CD is boring. It sounds like rejected tracks from the Circle Jerks, if you can imagine how bad that is. Don't waste the time or money on this. **[To The Left Records]** *Danny Vendetta.*

DIARY OF DREAMS Moments of Bloom: 1994-99 CD

Diary of Dreams gives us nearly 78 minutes of sensual, eerily muted, wonderfully dreamy electro-pop with Gothic influences all around. The music [recorded / released between 1994-'99], although electronic as mentioned, has a piano track running throughout that is similar to the tinkling heard in the *Exorcist* soundtrack. The lyrics are a mixture of German / English, changing from song-to-song, and sometimes even in the same song, adding a dramatic verve to the music. Creepy but skillfully played and well written, **Moments of Bloom** should / will move to the front of your CD collection in short order. **[Metropolis]** *N.Z.*

DIE LAUGHING Incarnations: A Retrospective CD

Die Laughing is a Gothic band from the UK that has been around a few years. Unlike many new Goth bands that have been experimenting using elements from industrial and electronica, Die Laughing play straight up Goth that may sound a bit outdated but remains true to its origins. Electric guitars lead these dark melodies that glisten with acoustic guitar and atmospheric keyboards. **Incarnations: A Retrospective** provides the listener the progression of Die Laughing from the generic Goth band to something distinctly different and beautiful. Rachel Speight's vocals penetrate with clear, angelic harmonies, to songs that have dark themes of loss, death and decay that seem to dominate much of Goth music. But, isn't that what you listen to Goth for in the first place? **(Cleopatra)** *Mike Pfeiffer.*

DISMAL EUPHONY All Little Devils CD

I took this CD to Mexico to listen to while on vacation, and it reminds me a lot of the type of music that another Gothic / Black metal band is doing there called Dark Forest. I like "Days of Sodom" (actually, that's a name for a band!), "Rage of Fire," "Victory" and the title track "All Little Devils." Oh hell... I like all of the songs! I also like the fact that they use a woman on vocals and back-up vocals. That's pretty cool. It's sort of what Therion does. "Lunatic" and "Psycho Path" sound killer, just killer. If you're into real heavy music, you must get this. Thank you Nuclear Blast for signing these guys! **[Nuclear Blast]** *Gerry Cummings.*

DISMEMBER Hate Campaign CD

This is the answer to my prayers! Now listen bub, if you think this is the first time I've heard of Dismember, you're wrong. It is, however, the first time I listened to Dismember -- and I'm pleasantly surprised! The first song, "Suicidal Revelations", kicks an incredible amount of ass! It rocks on so many levels -- it's amazing! It's heavy as hell, but also features an incredible amount of guitar harmonies! The harmonies are somewhat lost on songs two and three ("Questionable Ethics" and "Beyond Good & Evil," respectively). One thing I can tell you, these guys didn't want any wasted space between songs; they're almost fused together; I don't know if there's some type of epic storyline running throughout this CD. If there is one, I didn't get it. The harmonics return with force on "Retaliate." I love guitar harmonies! I turn to butter when I hear guitar harmonies! (Don't tell anybody I said that!) "Enslaved to Bitterness" starts with harmonies and then goes into an incredible heavy riff! WOW! I'm a Dismember convert -- big time! I felt the same chills when I first heard In Flames! Two amazing bands on the same record label -- what's up with Nuclear Blast? They're signing the best bands in the world! These bands are making the older ones seem like yesterday's news! The other incredible songs in this album are: "Mutual Animosity," "Patrol 17," "Thanatology," "Bleeding Over," "In Death's Cold Embrace" and the title track, "Hate Campaign." All bow down to Dismember! **[Nuclear Blast]** *Gerry Cummings.*

DIVIT Low Speed Chase CD

This is a great example of quality new-style punk rock. While they stay with the typical California punk format, they add a lot of personality to their music. Although the lyrics tend to revolve a bit too much around religion (specifically Christian), they're written in an obscure enough way that one can interpret them in a few different ways. You can see them as religious or just inspirational. That isn't to say that all of their songs are written this way. Their bass player is extremely exceptional. In the liner notes you can see him rocking pretty hard on a fretless bass. If you don't know much about instrumentation, know this: fretless is really hard to play as well as he does. On a different note, though, there's one particular track on this disc that is *muy* horrible. A song titled, "Everknown," is not sung by the lead singer, but by a different member. They should not let him do that anymore. He sounds like a weak-voiced high-school punk kid that can't find the tune of the song. Skip this song, but revel in all of the others. **[Coldfront]** *Danny Vendetta.*

JULIE DOIRON AND THE WOODEN STARS s/t CD

Breathy heartfelt vocals set to jangly guitars really move this listener. Former bassist for Eric's Trip, Doiron comes across strongly like a fem Geoff Farina (Karate). This makes no comparison to the contemporary indie exploits and in that regard is very refreshing and timeless. Recommended. **(Tree)** *R. Overmyer.*

THE DONNAS Get Skintight CD

Dirty, raw, balls-out, and genuinely hot! These chicks get right down to business and kick ass. This CD is a bit better played than the previous recordings I've heard and the songs are as cool as ever. These girls can rock the crap out of most guys I know, and probably any of their brothers on Lookout. Not that other Lookout bands don't rock, it's just that... well... they aren't the Donnas. Someone I know likened them to the Ramones and called them a rip-off band. I have to disagree – a lot. While their sound is more like the earlier garage punk bands, it has a more rock-n-roll edge. I'm not a fan of girl bands, because they don't know how to rock, but these girls certainly do. I'd suggest this album, so you too, can pick your favorite Donna and fall in love with a woman that can really rock. **[Lookout!]** *Danny Vendetta.*

DRAIN STH Freaks Of Nature CD

Drain STH are an all-female Metalcore band from Sweden, featuring South American-born Flavia Canel on guitar, playing deep, dark, dank chords; Anna Kjellberg on chunky bass; Martin Axen pounding on the drums and Maria Sjoholn on vocals. They were the only women on the Ozzfest bill and they tour constantly, playing over 200 gigs so far this year through October. The band sounds more unified than their previous Horror Wrestling; that album sounded like four individuals playing at the same time. **Freaks Of Nature** is tougher and darker with slow, deliberate tempos and drawn out vocals that goes down like diesel oil coating your throat. There are loads of songs about pain, death (both metaphoric and physical), betrayal and lies. Get a taste of "Alive." "*My blood has turned to dust and all has died that I have trusted. I know you as I know my pain.*" Ye-Ouch! "*My heart is bruised and sore. My crucifixion complete,*" Sjoholn screams in "Crave." The best song, "Simon Says," features rap vocals, though I could do without the male rapper's voice. If you are a fan of dark, loud music with unhappy endings, "Freaks Of Nature" is for you. For more info go to: www.drainsth.com **[Mercury / The Enclave]** *Allen Salyer.*

HEATHER DUBY Post to Wire CD

This is precisely what "new" music is all about: taking several genres of music and skillfully blending them together, challenging the tenets of accepted pop music, all the while taking advantage of today's studio technology. Heather Duby does all these things, and coughs up a late-night gem that at times (Kensington Place, September) could pass as the soundtrack to a Gothic horror movie. This is an album about loss, loneliness, fear, and the power coursing subtly underneath those emotions. Duby sings like Tracy Thorn and her songs challenge expectations like Peter Gabriel's and Kate Bush's, but don't think for a moment you've heard this one before. **Post to Wire** is original and eclectic, and best listened to alone. **(Sub Pop)** *Bob Toole.*

EDDIE THE RAT s/t CD

Although I should've gotten a head's up when seeing the record label [Seeland – Negativeland's label] that released this gem, I didn't expect this. It's madness, total madness! Splicing together music and a seemingly endless stream of samples, Eddie the Rat has given us a near perfect CD to play when you feel like scrambled eggs. Not psychedelic, but rather just plain psychotic. It has a Residents feel to it, but it's far more disjointed. Although I end up on the verge of a headache after listening to the CD, I can't stop playing it! If you're looking for something that stands out from the fray of most of today's mundane music scene, Eddie the Rat is yours – enjoy. **[Seeland]** *Norman Zebrowski.*

THE ELECTRIC HELLFIRE CLUB Empathy for the Devil 2-CD

Here's another fine piece o' plastic by the head hell raisers from the Cheese state. Ever since I saw them open for Christian Death back in '93 I knew they were special. Here's another example of the band that I personally feel is the most important bridge between rock and industrial ever. Period. End of sentence. 3-count, you're pinned. Not only can this band throw down funky industrial beats as good as anyone, they also combine the tongue-in-cheek rock of Spinal Tap, without looking cheesy. Fronted by Mr. Thomas Thorn, formerly with the Thrill Kill Kult [he left them to pursue something far greater] and, although he hasn't received much acclaim, it seems everyone who should like him is annoyed that he's not enough of this or enough of that. He's proven that industrial music can be mixed with rock-n-roll, not as a bastardized synth mix of old hits; but as a swear-to-God, he's actually playing that kit / guitar / bass live, kicking rock-n-roll. This is 2-CD set, with the first disc being the better of the 2, it includes covers of Mötley Crüe's "Shout at the Devil," AC/DC's "Highway to Hell," the Cure's "Killing an Arab" and a smashing cover, hence the CD's title, of the Rolling Stones' "Sympathy for the Devil." These are versions of how Mr. Thorn would have done them originally. They're intense. The second CD is a medley [including the legendary Bauhaus song "Bela Lugosi's Dead"] that's much more of a trance-like journey through what an EHC live show is. I've always liked this band, and this 2-CD treat is no exception. Also included is a new song ["The Bishop's Folly"] from their forthcoming CD. This entire album is a testament to a band that deserves far more recognition. Not only are they one of the best industrial bands in the US; they also could be called one of the best Goth bands too. If you think Trent Reznor is an innovator, check these guys out and see what you've been missing. **(Cleopatra)** *P. Hahn.*

ELEVATOR THROUGH Vague Premonition CD

Never liked Eric's Trip or didn't care for Elevator To Hell. So why all of a sudden did these stoners capture my third eye with their newest incarnation? It's a fuzzy groovy happening akin to the Euro 60's psych. A less complex Pentangle, a heavy Syd Barrett (Is that a Syd cover I hear?) and a weirdo Donovan feel. It's stuff that Robyn Hitchcock nailed and decided to take it to the other side. Maybe a little nod to The Jefferson Airplane, but better to say it's the over seas flower power that motivated these cats. On a stoner level of one to 10 -- it hits a seven. One more bong hit will send this into space. **(Sub Pop)** *Bryan Ramirez.*

ENDLESS Beauty, Tears and the Setting Sun CD

It took awhile for the first song to get going, but then the guitars and drums kicked in. As I listened to Endless, I felt some unoriginality. I found nothing new in their song "Children." Sure, the voice is intense, but... "Defeat" was next and showed a bit more promise. I liked it a bit better. "Doomed" has acoustic instruments intertwined with heavy guitars. It sounds fine. "A Weeping Mist Reveals" sounds like a ballad. As I listened, I was reminded of dreams that I've had -- nice song. "In Stone He Creeps" sounds too much like Cathedral to me. The other songs on this CD don't make me jump around like a monkey screaming, "Endless! Endless! Endless!" **(Pavement)** *Gerry Cummings.*

ENEMY YOU Where Nobody Knows My Name CD

This isn't a band that you can love or hate. Their sound isn't original, but it isn't boring. It's like a bunch of guys who love bands

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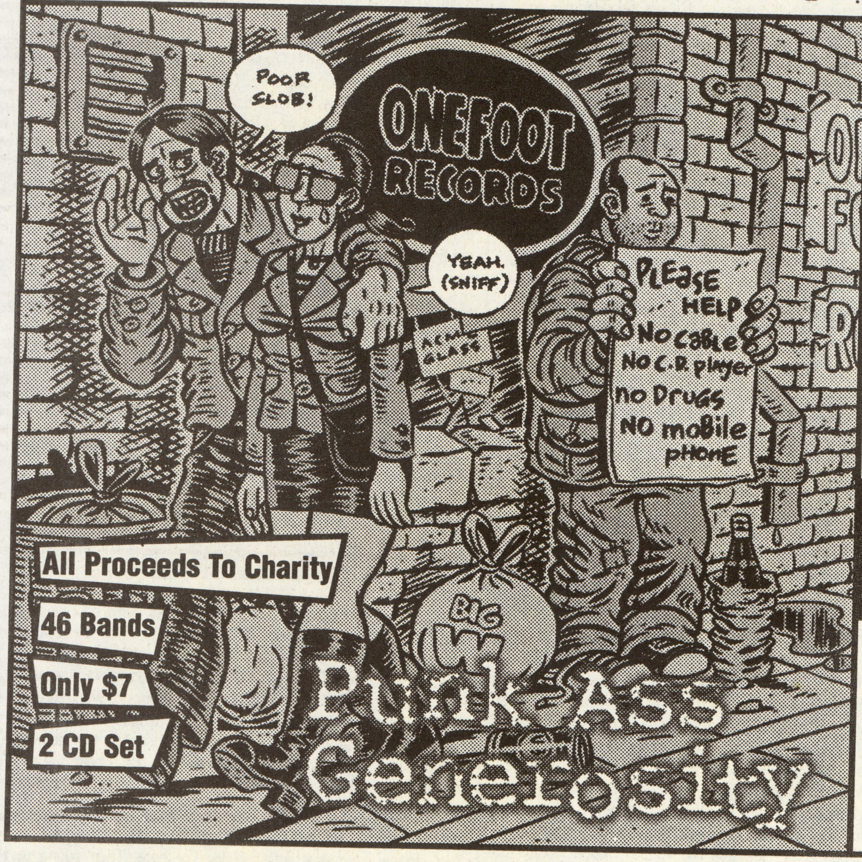
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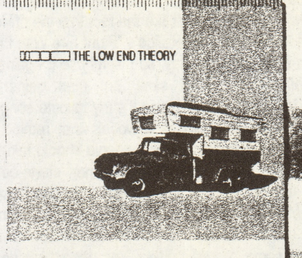

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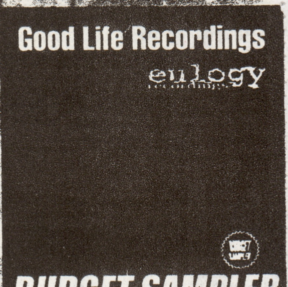

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like Screeching Weasel (before their long break-up), NOFX and Bad Religion, and took little bits from their favorite songs and put it together in a way that follows all the formulas, yet has enough creativity to get by. I guess that would explain why Enemy You is on Panic Button; Screeching Weasel drummer Dan Panic heads it. Way to branch out into unexplored areas of music, Danny-boy! There are a few good songs here, but the redundancy will keep you skipping around to just those few tracks, after you've listened to the whole CD a couple of times. **[Panic Button]** *Danny Vendetta.*

ESTRELLA 20/20 Afromexicana CD

First off, if you ever see an album that has something along the lines of "Young Lion's Conspiracy," pick it up, 'cause everything I've ever heard with that emblem on it plain rocks. This is no exception. **Afromexicana** features nine tracks of pure, unadulterated, garage / trash / punk mayhem from Japan. Maybe not the "new soul sound," that the bio proposes it be, but loud and raucous enough to make you forget the original stuff. The kind of sound you'd expect to hear from Estrus bands. **(Estrus Soul Lions Club)** *P. Hahn.*

EVENRUDE Bump CD

It's hard to recommend this CD with a clear conscience. There's been so much bad press about these guys, plus... well... they're corny and clichéd as hell. The fact that Less Than Jake likes them is another strike in my book. Evenrude seem to play in the alternative no-man's land between punk, funk and straight rock. At times they remind me of The Royal Court Of China (a glam-metal / alt. band from the late 80's) and at other times the early 90's Chili Peppers. Sometimes they seem pretty original. Something isn't right, and I can't figure out what is. **(Sony)** *Fike.*

FAMOUS MONSTERS Around the World in 80 Bikinis! CD

This CD from these Famous Monsters, isn't a new album, it's a compilation of three 7"s that are *way* out of print. So if you missed them the first time, this CD gives you a chance to own these fine, rare surf / garage rock songs. I missed out on the 7"s, so I was VERY delighted to get this CD in my review pile. Sean Yseult, guitarist, has described her band as "...a horror version of Josie and the Pussycats." That is the best description I've come across, so I won't try to make a better description. Famous Monsters mix trashy surf sound crossed with lyrics about skulls, monster girls, and blood, plus the authentic horrific screams of women. In my opinion, it's a great combination. The music sounds like early Man / Astroman most of the time, but the Famous Monsters have lyrics. If you don't have any of these out-of-print records, get this CD. The third 7" on this compilation was limited to 300 copies, which alone makes it worth buying. However, don't get it for the one "bonus track." It's not quite worth it, as the bonus track is supposed to be a bunch of monsters at a party getting drunk. It wasn't as amusing as I thought it would be. Instead buy this for the way cool monster surf songs! **(Estrus)** *Stefan Peterson.*

FIFTY TONS OF BLACK TERROR My Idle Hands CD

In America, it'd seem that this came out far too quickly after the incredibly well done and well received Demeter album which, of course, it has, in America anyway (it was out in Europe a year ago). In America, the band can't use their real name, "Penthouse." America's the place where 50 Tons... toured small-ish punk clubs and went virtually unheard on radio. America's the place where 50 Tons... should be bigger than Elvis and the Beatles. America's about to be destroyed. Rockabilly-blues with a punk snarl and overdrive guitar unprocessed and ready for a new millennium of rock-n-roll rebellion. Ian Astbury needn't try to reform his old band because somebody has finally concluded what the Cult started with their Electric album. "Creepers Reef," "Valley of the Sows," "Giant Haystacks" and "Lil Brown Kisses" are the best songs that you or I will ever hear and completely erase all of the mistakes of the past 2 decades. This CD, unleashed January 18, means the Apocalypse is the least of our worries now. *"Unstick your ass to the wall!"* **[Beggar's Banquet]** *David Lee.*

THE FLAMING LIPS 1984-1990 CD

To me, The Flaming Lips were never terribly important. They were that band that did that "Vaseline" song that cracked a smile a little from time to time. So, when I got this CD, I felt a little awkward, like if you're forced to spend a few hours alone with a person you've seen around for seven years, but never really talked to. I had no relation to this band; they weren't a part of my identity. After listening to it though, I kind of wish they had been -- at least, in their earlier years. They're psychedelic garage riffage has become almost infectious. This CD, according to the liner notes, isn't a "greatest hits" package, but more of an explanation of the band. And this explanation isn't short on covers. The Lips include a pretty sloppy rendition of Sonic Youth's "Death Valley 69," The Sonics' "Strychnine" and they even make Elvis Costello sound halfway decent with their version of "Peace Love and Understanding." The CD also includes a lo-res video for "Unconsciously Screamin'." After listening to this, I doubt that I'll go and buy the entire Flaming Lips collection, but I probably wont get rid of this CD either. **[Restless]** *Tom Muth.*

FOLK IMPLOSION One Part Lullaby CD

Folk Implosion is Lou Barlow of Sebadoh and John Davis. I always liked Folk Implosion's song "Natural One." What makes "One Part Lullaby" good is they expanded the sound of that one song into a whole album of complicated guitar with beautiful singing. Right away, Barlow's voice stands out in "My Ritual" as he sings about not having angst, but a happy carefree existence: "*It's getting easy not to suffer all the time. Happy anarchy is all I really crave.*" But there is an edge to too much happiness. "*Don't touch me 'cause I've had too much to feel tonight.*" Nature is the enemy in "One Part Lullaby." "*One part lullaby, 2 parts fear. Another animal mixing up the atmosphere... weather is not your friend. There's perfect weather inside.*" It's modern living with all mod cons vs. the dirty wild nature. There's an ironic twist to the lyric "*I'm not a rebel or the natural one, I'm in love with chemicals.*" The song has an overall religious feel to it. "Free To Go" is about being trapped. "*I noticed they were looking at me, I didn't like what they'd seen.*" Despondent, locked in his room, it's about divorcing parents from a child's point-of-view and how the child sometimes feels responsible. Sampling Serge Gainsburg's "Requiem Pour Un Con" in "Serge," this rhythmic, intelligent instrumental is on par with Pell Mell. Born on the East Coast, moved to the West Coast, Barlow sings songs about his new homeland. The nursery rhyme "E.Z.L.A." is equivalent to Randy Newman's "I Love L.A." Having moved from the North, he ponders, "*Without the seasons, will I know how to change?*" He finds the people, "*cold like the desert at night.*" He also thinks L.A. is the "Kingdom Of Lies." "*Turn your anger to conviction.*" He's trying to shake his soul awake in "Mechanical Man." "I don't want to be 'Someone To Love'" is a dejected love song documenting Barlow's journey of self-loathing. "Chained To The Moon" is a psychedelic folk song that calls back to the Byrds full of galactic imagery. The slipping bass line in "No Need To Worry" augments the best singing on the album where he "*never knows what I am thinking until I dream.*" For more info go to: www.folkimplosion.com **[Interscope]** *Allen Salyer.*

FONDA The Invisible Girl CD

This review calls for investigation. It's one of those situations where the lost press kit may be of some help. I thought that some of the members of Fonda may have formerly existed in the defunct K Recs' band, Heavenly. The formula for Fonda's songs is very similar in that they're bubbly, clean with Brit girl / guy vox and the occasional augmentation of an analog synth. After staring at cover pictures of the 2 bands side by side, I eventually reached the conclusion that they are most likely not containing and not made up of the same members. However, it's certain that fans of Heavenly would do this. **(Top Quality)** *R. Overmyer.*

FORCED REALITY s/t CD

Forced Reality is an American street punk band. Pretty decent for US Oi, there's some classic Oi guitar playing here. Forced Reality has songs about things like brotherhood and the flag, typical Oi topics. Unfortunately, none of these themes, combined with the music, quite stuck with me. I didn't find the record particularly engaging. The one big problem I had with this album was the production. I didn't think it was dirty enough for punk / Oi. It was almost a little too well done. However, the last track on the CD, a bonus "demo" track, sounded just right. If the whole album had been recorded like the demo track, the songs might have been a little stronger. Unfortunately, I don't think that Americans can do Oi as well as the British skinheads of 1982. I'd recommend this CD to people who dig American Oi bands. **(Taang!)** *Stefan Peterson.*

THE FOXYMORONS Calcutta CD

With a name like "The Foxymorons", this two-man project [out of Texas] probably doesn't find much more than occasional coffeehouse / bookstore gigs' on their schedule. That's too bad, really. Their sense of pop music writing and performance is uncanny. Great song-writing, coupled with decent musicianship and a seeming knowledge of different genres, makes songs like "Perfectly," "Broken Heart," "Always," "Something New" and "Please Be Miranda" winners on so many different levels. "Broken Heart" is a tougher-than-tears southern-rocker, "Always" is its more sympathetic counterpart, while "Something New" evokes memories of the Byrds and maybe the hippie-ish stuff of the modern day Foo Fighters (yeah, really). "Perfectly," on the other hand, would fit nicely on the next Jonathon Richman album, with its hurried, uncomfortable, totally poppy sound. These guys rock! Some of the tracks on **Calcutta** get pretty kitschy, but cut these guys a little slack; you can figure out what's worth listening to and skip the rest, which will leave you with more time to listen to the good stuff [www.infoasis.com/people/ampop/amp.html]. **(American Pop Project)** *Fike.*

FREED At Sixes and Sevens CD

In any type of media, you have about 10 minutes to capture your audience. Whether it is movies, books or music. In this case, we have a CD from pissed off pop rockers Freed. Freed decided to start their CD off with a "Looney Tunes" sample. The pure annoyance of hearing a cartoon instead of music, made me want to turn it off. Nevertheless, I soldiered on in hopes of marvelous music. Leader Alan Freed seems to be pretty adamant about something, and it shows in the 10 songs on this album. Freed definitely wins the title for the "longest song titles" category, with titles like, "Living to Remember a Day...When We Weren't Quite So Cold." I bet writing a set list can be a real bitch. **[no label]** *Chris Wardell.*

SKIDD FREEMAN What Did You Expect... CS

The man, the myth is back with more completely fried-out, space-like nuggets. This continues to blow my mind. Skidd is someone who's been living in East Lansing for however long and continues to self-release some of the most non-descriptive psychedelic blowouts that've ever come out of the region. Freeman's "technique" nods from anywhere from K.K. Null's overload, to Roky Erikson's brainwave, to Soul-Junk bleating beats and to this musical environment Freeman has created to tolerate this mundane and no-brained pop world. The songs have the spirit of pure expression in terms of what the common un-cultured jerk would call "ramblings." No, this is *art.* It's pure cranium rock only making sense to those who are "in tune" to the un-limitations of creative expression. It's so over the top that I nominate Freeman's music to the holy trinity of bent music of the 20th century. Now, the music is pretty non-descript, which is good, it has its own universe. The drum machines stumble over each other while bouncing the delay off the walls, crazy fuzzed-out freak guitars with Skidd going to town lyrically, like a preacher with fire in the lungs. It's sad 'cause the Lansing area had a unique, small psych scene but was ruined by some really bad people. It's really sad 'cause of Skidd is alone at the helm. Regardless, he's always been the king and always will be. It's just $6 a pop. Long live Skidd Freeman! (**Skidd Freeman** c/o POB 4281 E. Lansing, MI 48826) *Bryan Ramirez.*

THE GADJITS Wish We Never Met CD

The Gadjits have somehow managed to do the impossible: mellow out (with last year's At Ease, a wishy-washy organ saturated almost sarcastic waste of album), survive (touring with the Slackers, Toy Dolls and others), and come back *stronger*! This Year's Model, **Wish We Never Met**, is not a return to the punky spaz-ska of their early recordings. Instead, it's an aggressive soul-laced ska stomp, delivered with the bratty, punk, "*Screw you, idiot!*" attitude that got them where they are. "About You" is a cracker "Stir It Up," that works. In different ways, the whole album's full of that sort of stuff, sincere sarcasm to set the mind in motion. At Ease sounded like the typical "asleep on TV" album, that might've landed them on *The Tonight Show*, but eventually would've drove them into the ground. Thankfully, **Wish We Never Met**, brings the Gadjits back to being a real band, that bleeds, cries, swings, hits, rocks and ultimately wins. **[Hellcat / Epitaph]** *Fike.*

GARDENIA Soulburner CD

I've been meaning to review this CD for quite a while now. Sorry guys! Anyway, the production is top notch, the drumming is fast and the vocals are pretty vicious. I don't like the fact that the riff to "As A True King" reminds me a bit of Metallica's "Fight Fire With Fire," but what the hey. I'm feeling good today, so I won't use it against these guys. "Powertool" begins a bit slow, but then gains power. "Deserted" kicks in soon afterward, and it's my favorite song on the CD. It's got harmonies and incredible vocals that remind me of Bruce Dickinson. This is the direction Gardenia should take! I wish all of their songs were like it. Song 4, "Soulburner" starts out... and it didn't impress me at first. I think it sounds a bit like Pantera. "If Tomorrow's Gone" is the obligatory song. Cool guitar harmonics are heard, but the vocals remind me of alt-music! "Small Electric Space" starts with some beautiful piano. Yes, the vocals do sound like Bruce's. But, more than a hindrance, it's good! "Chaos in Flesh" is next, and it tore my face off! It's heavy! Anyhoo, while I have some qualms with certain parts on this CD, I would say if you want cool metal, with good vocals and cool guitar harmonies, get Gardenia. **(Nuclear Blast)** *Gerry Cummings.*

GARLIC BOYS Love CD

Hands down, the most diverse 12 songs ever to be included in a CD package. Some of their best songs like "Variety Kanshikan" and (most notably) "Too Late True Love" are straight pop-punk (the latter featuring backing cellos), while the rest of **Love** reminisces Faith No More's Angle Dust-era with more speed, less metal and lots of unclassified, but original silliness. This includes all these start-stop motions and tempo changes that go from an adult contemporary pace to blood curdling grind. But just like on the album Poem, the humor of not taking themselves seriously is present throughout **Love** (which brings up the question of whether or not their poppiest material is serious or a self-parody). It's catchy, regardless, but a lot of the time hard to follow. **(Howling Bull)** *Demangis.*

GARLIC BOYS Poem CD

There's a lot of diversity here. The Garlic Boys fall under the classification of "Japanese grindcore," but there could be much debate to this, thanks to their off beat sense of humor of not taking themselves seriously. For examples, country breakdowns, funk riffs and ballad sounding intros present amongst all the gang chants, metallic overtones and rapid fire drumming; **Poem** is all over the place. This is quite entertaining at times, although their "clown-core" can run a bit tiring at times. (**Howling Bull**) *Demangis.*

GARRISON The Bend Before the Break CD

These guys need to simmer down. I was a bit fond of the music, but it's emo. It's as if they're trying to fit a mold instead of actually making music, but you always have to start somewhere. Nearly every band in the world starts out by playing either a certain artist's style, or music of a certain genre. That's where I think Garrison is. I'd be interested to see how they develop their own style in the future. I hope they strive to make a name for themselves and not sell out to their scene. Lets face it, the emo scene is a bit too specific in terms of what the bands play, how they act and what they look like (at least around these parts), and that's a big reason why the ska and swing scenes became less than desirable. The bands [and their fans] pigeonholed themselves and others grew tired of it. Let's not go the way of the dinosaurs. Branch out and not only accept change, but work with it and develop a unique sound. *Danny Vendetta.*

GLIMMER Silver Zone CD

At the end of each decade in the rock and roll era there has always seemed to be a band that was able to sum up the previous 10 years of musical output. The '60s had the Stones, the '70s Cheap Trick, the '80s Guns–N-Roses and the '90s will have Glimmer. What Glimmer adds to the formula is also what makes all the difference. Glimmer's blending of pop-rock and gut-punch guitar far outshines anything Seattle, or anywhere else for that matter, ever produced but maintains every ounce of its dark emotional draw. Pop? Yes, but not shallow. Political? No, but not unconscious. The beauty of it all is that the group makes no effort to separate any of its many parts; it all comes together organically and beautifully. Take the lead track "Velveteen" for instance; it is two and a half minutes of pure adrenalized passion and warfare with enough tenderness to make it almost sweet, almost but not quite. The rest of the album is much the same and feels more like a package than a collection of songs, though any number off the disc could be a hit at rock radio. The title track, "Silver Zone," "Make it Real" and "Velveteen" are the best bets for maximum exposure. Though it is unfair, I am going to compare the band to Fastball only for the fact that there are certain tones that Glimmer capture that I have only heard before on the last Fastball disc. Should Glimmer take off as deserved and expected, it will be easy to reverse the comparison. As for performance, the **Silver Zone** that the band sings of must be located somewhere in a used guitar shop because this record just reeks of classic rock guitar heroes like Marc Bolin and Keith Richards. You could probably catch a buzz just by sniffing Guy Griffin's guitar strings, they are that thick with substance. The bass and drum interplay is classic rock and roll with emphasis on the roll. Producer Jim Wirt (Jimmy's Chicken Shack, Sprung Monkey) adds some very subtle keyboards in just the right spots; overall, it is just an incredible alchemy of sound. For fans of Griffin's former band, The London Choirboys, there is the occasional similar strain but this is an altogether different thing. Glimmer is either a band completely out of time or the lead soldiers in another power-pop invasion. In either case, they are vital rock and roll. [**Straight Line / Atlantic**] *D. Lee.*

GLUECIFER Get the Horn CD

Hair metal lives!! One would think only Mick Mars could be responsible for the opening riff... No, this is Gluecifer and this is their latest release. Fortunately, not all of the cuts fall into such a category – some are barer boned and hard driving. Biff Malibu's vocals vary from track to track, sounding like Axl Rose on one, then somewhere between Danzing and the Cult on the next. Overall, I'm not quite sure what to make of it all. There are some really good sounds here, but you may find yourself working hard to get past some of the cock-rock cheesiness. [**Sub Pop**] *Brent Norton.*

THE GODS HATE KANSAS For Snakes CD

It's always nice to get a record that sounds so different and unlike anything else out there in the whole punk genre. But the one disadvantage to this is that being original runs the risk of being unlistenable. Take The Gods Hate Kansas for example, they get props for being difficult to classify, props for some clever song titles ("Gorilla Suits Are Expensive These Days" being a favorite) and as an added bonus, a CD-ROM filled with political ramblings, a video for the aforementioned song and an extra hidden song. Unfortunately, TGHK's ingenuity for being creative doesn't make up for their ability to be completely boring. Like if Jawbreaker had no melody or style. Hey, TGHK can be comparable after all. (**Bad Monkey / New Disorder**) *Demangis.*

THE GOLDEN SHOWERS s/t CD

The Golden Showers have quite an interesting mix of sounds on this CD. They play raw garage rock; throw sound clips into the mix occasionally and random sounds that made me think I was at the Drag strip. At times, the GS sound like they could've been included in the "Nuggets Box Set," had they been around at that time. There's a Cramps' influence as well, especially in the guitar playing. The vocals have a cool reverb sound that sounds like the announcer at a drag race, like it could echo for miles. A good way to describe the Golden Showers might be to use the phrase "experimental garage-rock." This is a pretty good effort on the Golden Showers' part. If you're looking for something a little different or off-the-wall in the garage-rock genre, give this a shot. (**Reptilian**) *Stefan Peterson.*

GRADE Under The Radar CD

Someone has finally done it. A band has managed to effectively combine two forms of music previously uncoupled, emo and metal, and make it seem as natural as Swiss cheese and holes; there's enough punk action in the middle that it never really takes on the qualities of either. In fact, so much is contained within the music, that no two people will hear the same thing. Indie-cred, rock, metal, emo, hardcore, punk, call it what you will, but the fact of the matter is this album is innovative. Musically, the album is so well constructed that every moment of music interlocks exactly with the emotion of the vocals. Grade is stickier than any epoxy or glue could ever claim to be. These Canadians are supplying a needy world up-beat emo metal riffage for the hardcore inclined, while perceiving a more colorful world by crossing their eyes and biting their own hands. (**Victory**) *David J. Ciancio.*

GUILTY BYSTANDERS s/t CD

Remember the Minor Threat song, "Guilty of Being White"? Well that's what this band should be called.... The singer reminds me of Eddie Murphy or other black comedians that make fun of the straightness in white peoples speech. This guys voice is way too careful about what he's singing and all out too friendly sounding. It brings any rock or aggressiveness that the songs may have way down. The music is of the "college" near-punk variety. The sound quality's good though and I'm sure they have local fans. Heck, for all I know their live show may kick serious butt.... honkey butt that is. (**Guilty Bystanders** 2072 Mackinaw Davison, MI 48423) *C.O.*

THE GUNGA DIN Your Glitter Never Dulls CD

Increasingly, the remnants of rock-n-roll are becoming something more eclectic, more transcendental, more like the "music in your head." Criticism of rock music has always existed on paper, and in minds. It seldom leaves the door open in the minds it visits for the infinite minus-0 possibilities of artistic exploration. Often, it belies a consensus that everything that can be said and done has been done, and all future generations are cursed to drown forever in the undertow of redundancy. Luckily, rock music itself, like all music, exists not only in the mind, but in the physical universe as well. And fortunately, the physical universe is infinite, self-replenishing and without a beginning or an end. Happily, The Gunga Din are another group of musicians that've kicked open a door of infinite possibility. No longer will one band or musician be heralded as the sole pinhole conduit of musical constellations. Soon, more and more artists, like the Gunga Din, will punch holes through the stratosphere on their way out, and a greater picture will be apparent to all. (**Jetset**) *S. R.*

HALF LOOKING Tip of My Tongue CD

Lansing, MI's own all-grrrl band will inevitably draw comparisons to musical heroines Ani DiFranco and Indigo Girls, but swift categorization is unfortunate – this hard-working original band deserves to be judged on its own merits. The band's primary songwriter, Hez Naylor, writes very personal lyrics. On one hand she's exorcising her demons, confronting ex-lovers and assorted assholes, and dressing them down in a flurry of verbal battery. Example: In the song "Cheat," a snarling I-Can-Do-Better-Than-You-So-Go-To-Hell breakup song, it seems as though she can barely spit the words out fast enough to keep up with the furious pace of the music. On the other hand, in "Indiana Song," she revels in delight with her lover in an Indiana cornfield. This song also features the supple mandolin playing of fellow traveler Josh Davis from another favorite local band, Steppin' In It. But Half Looking's finest moment comes on Naylor's "The Air Is Clean," sung by the band's strongest vocalist, Lisa Corbett. Here, her voice soars: "*The air is clean and I can breathe again.*" It's a defining moment and a reassuring statement of confidence from a songwriter who often writes about insecurities and self-doubt. On "Divine" Corbett wraps herself up in the sexy and seductive lyric: "*Your breath on my neck / you take the loving lead... I'd follow you anywhere but for now / this hardwood floor will do.*" It's a hushed tone and one of the CD's highlights, with the ever-tasteful bluesy echo of Holly Miller's lead guitar in the background as Corbett purrs over a softly-picked acoustic guitar. In sum, **Tip of My Tongue** is an auspicious debut – they may only be Half-Looking, but they appear to be *playing* for keeps. Also, be sure to catch one of their powerhouse live shows if you can, and witness for yourself the thunderous drumming and percussion work of Murray Stewart-Jones, Half Looking's not-so-secret weapon. (**Jupiter Return**). *T. Hirsbrunner.*

THE HALFWAYS (She's a) Heart Attack 7"

Nice 80's-era sounding punk rock, with a little speedy rock-n-roll mixed in. Sometimes it reminds me of the Circle Jerks, so ya know it must be good. I'd like to hear a full-length from these guys. I'll be playing this more than once. (**Big Neck**) *Chad Overdose.*

HASTE Pursuit in the Face of Consequence CD

Ok, this is just beginning and it's already annoying me. I'm tired of NIN clones, or bands (like NIN, Ministry, or White Zombie) that abuse the use of weird sounds, snippets, or whatever you want to call them. The guys using this, I feel, are wasting valuable space on the CD. Once the music begins...well...it's kind of heavy. The vocals annoy me though. Actually, it's quite heavy. Again, it reminds me of bands like Biohazard, Earth Crisis, etc. "Irritation Persists" starts heavy, as do "Thought Market" and "Trial." I still think someone in the band has an annoying voice. I don't know, I love Century Media... but... I'd rather listen to a heavier band than Haste. [**Century Media**] *Gerry Cummings.*

THE REVEREND HORTON HEAT King... 7"

Two new, unavailable anywhere else, tracks from The Rev. Heat and his boys. Both sides are straight-ahead 50's style rock-a-billy. You get the unrelenting assault of Jimbo and Scott's relentless rhythm section, unto which the Rev. adds his own reverb-esque guitar licks. Hopefully this and, supposedly, a few other 7"s, will keep you satisfied until their next album, if you need something to quench your Rev thirst. (**Fun-Guy**) *P. Hahn.*

HELLRIDE Shitfaced & Pissed Off 7"

Imagine Motorhead crossed with good ol' Detroit rock. That's what comes to mind with Hellride's new single. Pete Pissed sings with great, gruff "Lemmy style" vocals, while the rest of the band plays the heavy Scandinavian rock that bands like Glucifer and the Hellacopters are shooting out these days. It's always good to see more high-energy rock coming out. Maybe soon we'll be able to hear bands like this on American radio. Until then, I'll be waiting for a full-length album from Hellride. As a side note, I'm glad that some of these Scandinavian bands, like Hellride, are singing with their native accents, instead of sounding too American. I think it gives the songs a little more personality. (**Radio Blast**) *S. Peterson.*

HIPPOS Heads Are Gonna Roll CD

Lead singer and frontman Ariel Rechtshaid named the band after his imaginary friend from childhood, "The Dangerous Hippo." Rechtshaid says that just because there are 3 horns in the band doesn't necessarily mean they are a ska band, but believe me, they are ska, but that's okay 'cause I like ska. Just listen to "Losing It" with its jumpy guitar chords and blaring horns. There are some pop tendencies that show through in a song like "Struggling" and some '60s influence on "Wasting My Life." At the Hippos best, they sound like They Might Be Giants gone ska with touches of Oingo Boingo craziness. For more info go to: www.thehippos.com [**Interscope**] *Allen Salyer.*

THE HOOKERS Black Magic Stallion 7"
THE HOOKERS Black Visions of Crimson Wisdom CD

The Hookers, who I'm guaranteed, are Norm Z's all time fave band, are back again to spread punk fueled metal satanic mayhem. And they do it as good as anyone I can think of. If you like punk played almost fast enough to be death metal, or vice versa, this is for you. Throw in a healthy dose of Deicidal lyrics, both in voice and print, and you've got the Hookers. They lay it down as heavy as it gets, falling someplace between fast paced punk and thrash. Both of these I highly recommend, especially the 7", as it's got a cover of an old Spinal Tap song -- you can't go wrong with Spinal Tap. (**Devil Doll**) (**Scooch Pooch**) *P. Hahn.*

HOT STOVE JIMMY Theme For A Major Hit CD

Is this the future of ska? There seemed to be more and more bands that are doing the ska scene a favor and adding and blending more original ideas and other forms of music to ska's now bland formula. This isn't to say that this is a great CD; I won't go that far. I'm saying that Hot Stove Jimmy is breaking away from the "pick it up" mentality that's pushed fans away. This latest album from, what used to be, a simple run-of-the-mill pop punk / ska band has stricken a most unusual chord. Their "new" sound is very familiar to Chicago's inventive and original Blue Meanies, but with some good and bad new... "features"... shall we call them. While their sound is reminiscent of ska, they're more artsy. The tempo, rhythms and chord changes are more dynamic and darker, with less up-beats than previous recordings. On the down side, it wasn't until the 5th song that the vocals did anything different. They sounded exactly the same from song to song and it got annoying. Another point about vocals: that's what anyone hears first when they listen to a record and on this particular record, you could tell a guitar player mixed it. The vocals were down at the same level, or beneath in some instances, and the guitar and drums were overpowering much of the time. Overall, I was impressed with **Theme...** but forgive me for saying this, it grooves really well and then hits hard, in an intriguing way. This casts a good shadow over what 'Jimmy used to put out and I hope it's a sign of things to come. Not only would I want to hear more from these guys in the future, to see where this new road has taken them, I'd like to see them rawk live today. [**Jump-Up**] *Danny Vendetta.*

ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK Songs from the Heart CD

What the hell am I going to say about this? Engelbert sings: "60's and 70's standards." This means, "Leaving on a Jet Plane," "My Cherie Amour," "Raindrops Keep Falling on my Head" and the Beatles' "Something" (done much better by Sinatra, who sang, "You stick around Jack it may show.") E.H. does an acceptable job, but the whole CD begs the question, why? **[Music Club]** *Joyner.*

HYDROMATICS Dangerous... 7"

If you haven't already heard of these guys, I'll fill you in. Fronted by Scott Morgan [read the rest of this issue to see what he's done], and backed by Nick from the Hellacopters along with Tony and Theo from The Nitwitz. It's a potent mix of musicians, and they lay down an equally potent mix of punk. Blasting at you from both sides, you get slammed by a Sonic Rendezvous cover, "Dangerous," to the sizzling b-side "Heaven." They've also got a full length that is out, and if you like music you owe it to yourself to pick them up. **(Rocket Dog)** *P. Hahn.*

THE ICARUS LINE Red & Black Attack CD

This was quite a nice surprise. With the cover of **Red & Black Attack** featuring the band sporting identical black shirts and red ties, the first thought that came to mind was The Knack. But thankfully, no one has to prepare him or herself for one-hit wonder power-pop (nor an overzealous brother who tries to take over the state of Michigan). The Icarus Line come from Los Angeles to let everyone know that everyone from their city doesn't sound like brainless surf punks with songs about beer and female anatomy. Instead, these guys scream their guts out about some of the grimmer aspects of paranoia (as opposed to the brighter sides of it). Imagine if The Nation of Ulysses didn't have their conspiracy theories or if Ink & Dagger didn't have their ridiculous vampire personas. But with the four songs that are included on this EP, there's hope that an original hardcore act doesn't have to include a gimmick. Wait a minute; they all wear matching black shirts and red ties, never mind. **(New American Dream)** *Demangis.*

IMPEL / DIVISION OF LAURA LEE split 7"

Each band offers us one-song with Impel taking the lead here. Both bands are pretty much emo with somewhat new school qualities especially with Impel who also sounds a bit more chaotic & extreme. Both bands are moody and I'd compare them to some others if I was more familiar with emo but I'm not (and I'm glad). **(Carcrash)** *Chad Overdose.*

IRON SAVIOR Interlude CD

Someone was nice enough to send me this CD, which is Iron Savior's fourth (I think?). Anyway, it's something to hold us fans until the next studio CD. There are five songs: "Iron Savior," "Brave New World," "Watcher In The Sky," "Riding on Fire" and "For The World." Man, listening to these tracks led to me question: When the hell is Iron Savior going to play the States? [When is Helloween going to come here for that matter?] We need good music! Please come back! Now back to the CD. I loved the initial guitar harmonies on the second song. "Touching the Rainbow" is very heavy. "Stonecold" had me thinking for a minute that this was the Rainbow song. But it's not. It's a pretty commercial song that could be played on the radio. The last song is "Desert Plains," the old Judas Priest tune. It's no secret that Judas Priest has influenced a ton of bands. Iron Savior is no exception. What KK and Glen did was revolutionize metal. Iron Savior, I'd like to think, is doing the same... of course. What's unfortunate is that it's not a fulltime band for each member... but hey! Nothing's perfect! For now, I am glad Iron Savior are around to make excellent metal. Yes! **[Noise]** *Gerry Cummings.*

JACKIE PAPERS Uckfay Ouyay CD

The Jackie Papers are 3 women and a guy from the Tampa Bay area playing quick tempo garage punk. Chris Barrows sings and writes most of the songs, as well as playing guitar with Jenny Page also on guitar, Heidi Flanigan on bass, as well as backup vocals, and drummer Heather Now. **Uckfay Ouyay** speeds by fast with its 11 2-minute songs. Opening with the high BPS old school punk sound of "Human Bullets," they warn that plastic people will kill you eventually. I can sympathize with "6:45" because we all hate to get up in the morning for work. Heidi Flanigan sings the sinister "Hit Me Twice" about masochistic couple making love: "*You let me beat you while you masturbate.*" Barrows really hates clowns, though it can be said he hates the tourist town of Sarasota as well. "*You've got the beauty of Don Knotts, made up like Tammy Faye,*" he sings in "Clowns." "Coolio Iglesias" is an instrumental with a good bass line, but the guitar solo has a bit of trouble. "Addiction" condemns suburbanites who become junkies because it's trendy. Taking slacker joy disapproval a bit further is "Hey, Suburbia" which sounds a bit like Green Day. "*We don't give a s**t about tomorrow.*" "King Of Your Mom" is wickedly funny, as a boy satisfies his girlfriend's mother. "I'm Not Online" is easily my favorite, a screaming anti-internet diatribe. It's a wonderful metaphor on obsession and agoraphobia. "*I'm not on-line, I'm not like you. I'd rather do a barbeque.*" **Uckfay Ouyay** is a tasty slice of Florida punk. **[Stiff Pole]** *Allen Salyer.*

KITTIE

THE JIVE TURKEYS ...Night of the Dragon Lady 7"

This is an abnormal little recording. It's kind of a bluesy mish-mash of big band, rock-n-roll and folk rock. It's reminiscent of Jon Spencer, Tom Waits and G.E. Smith [of *Saturday Night Live* fame]. It didn't sit too well with me, but I have a hard time listening to these kinds of crossovers. Still, it has its redeeming moments. The title song is definitely stronger than the backside. **[Alamount Black]** *Tom Muth.*

JOYDROP Metasexual CD

The word "Metasexual" was coined by Marco Vassi to convey the idea of sex as pleasure, not just procreation. Drummer Tony Rabalao explains the band's name "Joydrop" as a drug, a candy or the feeling you get when you are moved by a person or thing of beauty. They rather go together, striving to achieve the maximum enjoyment out of life. Formed in Toronto, the band features vocalist Tara Slone who studied opera. Joydrop is substantial power pop. Undoubtedly you've heard "Beautiful," a song that covets and disparages beautiful women who can get away with anything, maybe murder. The song starts out with sweet pop as she explains her envy, then the claws and fangs come out as she slams anorexic ideas of beauty ("*She walks between raindrops*"), switching to an ugly, scratchy monophonic voice where she blurts "beautiful like me" to accentuate her disdain. The ultimate irony is that Tara Slone is a pretty girl herself. "All Too Well" is a rhythmic hip-hop slab o' funk lamenting the loss of culture, the death of poetry, conjuring Kerouac images. "*My mind is my mind in spite of you.*" With angry guitars, an angry woman raps like Blondie's "Rapture," looking for meaning in life, but regardless if meaning is found or not, life goes on. "*Standing on a spaceship looking for life or a God or a gun or a matchbook telephone number to the one who might love you. Isn't it strange that we've come this far and still don't know who we are.*" The buzzing "Over And Under" keeps slipping into cutesy pop which is too bad because it's great when the song is dark talking about plastic people: "*Artificially made like orange cheese and pink lemonade.*" "If I Forget" is how those people always forget your name. "Breakdown" gives Slone a chance to sing from sweet to mournful emotions, busting open her soul and letting those opera lessons fly. "Strawberry Marigold" is full of psychedelic imagery: Mermaids sing, carpets with eyes, Nostrodamus and the Book of Revelations. "*It's dangerous to see into the future.*" In "Spiders" she's caught in a web of deceit, your touch is now "*like spiders all over me.*" She wants to "*squash them under my heel.*" She's trying to keep a relationship together in "Until" where lovers become strangers "*until the joydrops again.*" "Dog Star Radio" deeply saddens her watching the world fall apart. "Cocoon" is being comfortable in whatever you're going through and how some people are comfortable in their misery. There is more to this band than just "Beautiful." **[Tommy Boy]** *Allen Salyer.*

KEVORKIAN DEATH CYCLE A+O(m) CD

Hell of a name for a CD, isn't it? Probably a scientific or mathematical formula that, if I'd taken harder classes or paid more attention in classes I had, maybe I'd know what it is. However, since I don't, I'll have to stick to reviewing the CD. This band's reminded me of early Front 242 / Front Line Assembly since I first heard them four or five years ago. On this, their latest offering, everything I've heard makes the comparisons a fairly accurate assessment. They've got the "Wax Trax sound" down and they also throw in a little acoustic music ["Escape Part I"] for good measure. This is another US industrial band that doesn't get the attention because the critics seem to love the industrial sounds of NIN, Marilyn Manson and others. It's too bad, because KDC deserves the credit. **(Metropolis)** *P. Hahn.*

KITTIE Spit CD

Kittie are an all-female hardcore metal band whose members showed their claws by goading mostly male audiences with a male inflatable doll. Loud and proud, the three-song EP was produced by metal king GGGarth, known for producing some of the loudest bands on earth: Rage Against The Machine, L7, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Ozzy. **Spit** explores the spectrum of bliss and chaos in the world using big insect-in-your-ear buzzsaw chords supplied by Fallon Bowman and harsh out-of-breath vocals that intimidate. Singer Morgan Lander sounds like a swordswoman in battle; Red Sonja images come to mind when she screams, "*May death come quickly.*" "Charlotte" takes a break from Tanya Candler's chunky bass rhythms with a melodic interlude as Lander's voice switches from gurgling death vocals to chanteuse to back to gargoyle screams. Mercedes Lander supplies some great drumming on the song as well as on "Brackish" whose helicopter choppiness adds to the vocals and drums. **[Ng]** *Allen Salyer.*

KNOXVILLE GIRLS s/t CD

14 tracks of lo-fi madness that skirts the fringes of '40s country and rockabilly at times, featuring Bob Bert (ex-Pussy Galore and Chrome Cranks) and Kid Congo Powers (Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds). From catchy originals like "Kung Pow Chicken Scratch" and "Low Cut Apron/Sugar Fix." To a C. Feathers' cover "Have You Ever" and Ray Charles', "I Had A Dream." This music is extremely guitar heavy, with only three songs given bass credits. Throughout there's an almost constant drone of multiple guitars, a snapping snare and the warm fuzz of Berry London's keys. All in all a fairly refreshing lo-fi album, more interested in the music, than the presentation. **(In The Red)** *P. Hahn.*

THE KOVENANT Animatronic CD

If anger drives men to madness and obsessions turn men into raving lunatics, then the rotten, fermented combination of the two makes The Kovenant. Formally known as "Covenant," this band from Norway had to respell their name because a Swedish techno band had the same name. **Animatronic** is a 50-minute, in-depth exploration of loathing and redemption. What better way to overcome one's peers than to mortally despise the ground they walk on and the ideals they thrive upon? When the creative powers of members of Dimmu Borgir, Cradle Of Filth, Arcturus and Mayhem combine, one can only expect blinding majesty and intensity in its darkest and most enticing form. The album drips with evil incarnations of Satanic living, by centering one's universe on one's own beliefs, it also has a display of majestic beauty rarely found in this blackened form. The Kovenant makes use of bells, chimes, female vocals, keyboards and various other assorted extras to expand their music into the most dynamic form of black metal in creation. Elements of Goth, dance, thrash and industrial have been added to the mix, further expanding their already groundbreaking futuristic and space-aged version of black metal. The Kovenant has taken the opportunity to unify all forms of metal via extreme hatred and beauty. **(Nuclear Blast)** *D. Ciancio.*

ALISON KRAUSS Forget About It CD

This is pretty country music. Heed the Title. **[Rounder]** *Joyner.*

LACK OF INTEREST Trapped Inside CD

Lack Of Interest has been doing the whole "power-violence" thing since around the time of when the term was first being thrown around. Whether or not if they jumped on this band wagon or if each member of LOI had been doing this way before the band got together isn't determined; but one thing for sure is their blunt, but hateful attack on all things that bother them (government, violence, tough guys, cops, anyone who has given the band a hard time, etc.). Clocking in at an estimated total of 15 minutes, the 24 songs on **Trapped Inside** fly as a short burst of sucker punches without leaving any room for one to take a breather. Now if only someone could teach their "singer" not to resemble the grunting of "Tim Allen;" at least there aren't any songs about power tools. **(Slap A Ham)** *Demangis.*

LAIDLAW First Big Picnic CD

Well... this sounds like a new, and very polished, version of Lynyrd Skynyrd. Actually, they also remind me of Jackyl! I mean, there's already one Jackyl! Why have another one? I realize that might be unfair, so all I will say is that this is very well produced and played music. The vocals are excellent. Everything is excellent... except this stuff is really not for me. But I can tell you that I did like a couple of songs: "Send My Baby Home," "Burnin'," and the old standard, "Rock-N-Roll Hoochie Koo." Check them out if you're into Southern rock. **(Beyond Music / BMG)** *Gerry Cummings.*

LEADFOOT Take A Look CD

LeadFoot is caught in a paradox that plagues many stoner rock bands. Often from years and years of playing, touring and practicing (often beginning in the early teens) the musical abilities and musical-side of songwriting is often accomplished, sometimes downright great, and this is the case with LeadFoot, whose guitar riffs and melodies cannot be denied. The paradox lies within the cultural cheesiness and lack of imagination in lyrical content needed to eclipse even the most ridiculous 80's metal anthem. Many other bands in this genre display far more artistic ability in the realm of lyric content and song subject matter; Fu Manchu, Monster Magnet, and the Melvins, to name a few. Even a band like TAD was more exciting and interesting. I will spare a lyric quote, other than to tell you that LeadFoot is on par with Krokus and the like. This is sad, actually, because the band is truly talented musically, and the more I listen, the more I get an overall painting in my mind of a group who has lived too long under the self-imposed shadow of an "Ultra Rock Star" fantasy never realized. **(TheMusicCartel)** *Sam Rose.*

LES SAVY FAV The Cat and The Cobra CD

A fine album that continues in the DC / Virginia post punk tradition, with maybe some Unwound or some Universal Order of Armageddon thrown in there as well. The alternating crunchy then pop guitar seems to race through every song to the end in a head on collision. This band does a great job of writing songs in a sort of Jawbox formula, without ever sounding like Jawbox at all. Yeah, I like this. **(Self-Starter Foundation / French Kiss)** *Ed Emmitt.*

LOCK UP Pleasures Pave Sewers CD

It's going to be hard for Shane Embury and Jesse Pintado to start anew with another band that is not (obviously) Napalm Death. [I believe Napalm called it quits.] Or is this is a "side project" which is so in vogue now? I don't know? Actually I don't care. I care about the music. "Afterlife in Purgatory" is fast and vicious. "Submission" is also fast. This is some of the best music that Embury and Pintado have been involved in! Even better than, dare I say, the later material by Napalm! What's surprising is that it didn't take these guys long to write the songs, lay them down and record them. That's why I was predisposed to hate this CD. I was thinking, "Ah, this is going to be lazy songwriting, heavy metal crap." But, to my surprise, it's actually good! The songs are fast-n-furious. They're bursts of adrenaline that aren't long, most of the songs are around three minutes. If you liked Napalm Death, you'll love Lock Up. **(Nuclear Blast)** *Gerry Cummings.*

LONG BEACH DUB ALL-STARS Right Back CD

Guest appearances from reggae scene-makers Tippa Irie and Half Pint, and legends Barrington Levy and (Bad Brain's leader) HR peaked my interest. Checking the entire CD out, it seemed pretty down. "Sensi" (with Irie), "Pass It On" (with Half Pint), "Kick Down" -- dangr's wu-ish scary-dancehall rant about friends working the player angle, along with Levy's "Righteous Dub," highlights the guest tracks, which are all surprisingly strong. "Fugazi," an unsympathetic, sarcastic deadpan, that plays Minor Threat's words against Fugazi's idealism; highlighting a universal dualism that's easy to see, but difficult to avoid. Groovy and dubby, with deep reggae lines and the occasional punk or ska interlude, **Right Back** gets to the point quickly and doesn't pull any punches. It's fun to listen to, both musically and in the lyric's department. I've already decided Long Beach Dub All-Stars are way groovier than their predecessors, Sublime (how did I miss that? Were they that good? I don't know?). Listening to LBDA makes me think I should investigate Sublime a little more closely. **[DreamWorks]** *Fike.*

INGER LORRE Transcendental Medication CD

I always liked the Nymphs and the antics of their vocalist, Inger Lorre, who got more press for peeing on the desk of a record exec, than she ever got for her music. She sounds a bit like Courtney Love on the opening "She's Not Your Friend." That song has lush instrumentation and strings that work, though I found the instrumentation and strings could swamp a song like "It Could Happen To You." "Beautiful Dead" is the best song on the album, calling back to Penelope Houston's punk days in the Avengers. "*I've got so many friends on the other side!*" The song's bass line crawls through the mud, thick and rich like peat moss. She tells us her fantasy about killing a rock star on stage in "Gibby Haynes is Next," singing, "*Feels so good to be f****d up again.*" She claims she's a spiritual castaway and you believe it. "Haunted Bill" falls into Marilyn Manson / Iggy & the Stooges glam where most of the album centers itself. Like "Dusted," there is a theme of drugged, lonely soullessness in the lyrics. "*I put my trust in angel dust everyday... All the ways I lie to you... open up my wounds... My conscious has diminished as my appetite has grown.*" The "Thief Without The Take" is a bit of an oxymoron about the emptiness she feels. The closing "Sweet Release" finds her wanting to escape from this nightmare life. There's sort of a concept here, but I'm unclear on the story's moral, if indeed there needs to be one. **[Triple X]** *A. Salyer.*

LOW Christmas CD

As probably everyone knows, right after Halloween (or sometimes beforehand), music stores start stocking the racks with the usual crappy Christmas music. Of course, moms buy the bulk of this festive drivel. You, however, being one with more sophisticated tastes than the Kenny G. Christmas album, aren't swayed by mindless consumerism, may ask yourself if there's any holiday music out there that doesn't totally suck. Well, here's your alternative to the "Nutcracker." Low's **Christmas** consists of 5 original songs and 3 holiday favorites: "Little Drummer Boy," "Blue Christmas" and "Silent Night." This 3-piece produces beautiful harmonizing in tow with brushed drums and strong bass lines. A word to those with suicidal tendencies, this may not be the album for you during this trying holiday. Low has a tendency to be a little moody and depressing, but absolutely wonderful at the same time. **(Kranky)** *R. Overmyer.*

MANIMAL Horrorcore CD

Back in action after an extended break, Ohio's best horror punk band has returned with a strong album [*Is this the same Manimal from the early '80s? ed.*]. Their sound is punk rawk, mixed with 70's style hard rock. The vocals are TOOL-esque, with more of a growl. Lyrically, the band explores horror themes but doesn't get too overt in their references. Using the Misfits as a point of reference, I'd say that if you like "Queen Wasp" or "Die Die My Darling," this should be right up your alley. **(Self-released)** *Eric Reanimator.*

MEN OF PORN Porn American Style CD

How does slow heavy rock for dopers, with the emphasis being on the instrumental aspects of music, sound? The vocals, those that can be heard, are buried beneath waves of distorted guitar riffs and clean sounding drums. It's not my cup of tea, but fans of Kyuss, that don't mind the limited vox, should enjoy this. **(Man's Ruin)** *E. R.*

MERCURY Winter CD

Holy mother of mercy! Mercury is 1972 Roxy Music fornicating with... Spinal Tap and the end product is the worst aberration of sonic, angst-laced Goth-grunge this side of Plymouth! And those are only the better qualities about his record. Wait'll I get around to tellin' you what's sub-par on this waste of time! No really, stick around; it'll only take a minute... **(Sign Language)** *Bob Toole.*

METAL CHURCH Masterpeace CD

I'll use this tired cliché: "*Rising from the ashes like an undying Phoenix...*" Metal Church is re-born to claim its rightful place in the metal pantheon. Yes, you heard right. MC has reunited and has released a new album. While not as killer as their first or second album, it's much better than any of their later stuff and, guess what? David Wayne AND Kurt Vanderhoof are back in the fold! That's pretty cool, because MC never was the same without them. The first track is "Sleeps with Thunder," it's an immediate throwback to 80's trash metal. I like the harmonized parts in the guitar solo. "Falldown" is faster; with lots of double bass drumming courtesy of original MC skins man Kirk Arrigton. I must state, however, that after listening to the first two songs, I don't think the production is on par with other metal bands... even by MC's standards! I mean the best sounding MC record was the first one. Their second was also cool. I don't know if it's the age, the sound being a bit toned down, or the production costs (didn't Nuclear Blast give them enough money?). But the sound is not as killer. Anyway, back to the music, "Into Dust" sounds like the old MC. "Kiss from the Dead" begins with an acoustic intro, but then gets very heavy. The riffs are catchy. "Faster than Life" may not be fast, but it's heavy. "All Your Sorrows" is also heavy. "They Signed in Blood" begins, and by the beginning and the title, I can tell you it's an epic. Extremely heavy! "Sand Kings" closes; it's a very heavy song indeed. There are other songs, but they didn't bite me like the ones I mentioned. If you want your ass bitten, don't call your dog; go get the new Metal Church instead! **[Nuclear Blast]** *Gerry Cummings.*

THE MISTREATERS s/t 7"

Dirty punk rock. It's so dirty that I could smell dirt and grease while listening. Their crazy screamed vocals and raunchy, garage guitars make for good dancing. Wear the same shirt for a month, don't change your underwear and jam out to this. **(Big Neck)** *C.O.*

MORGION Solinari CD

I've read a lot of stuff about Morgion in *Metal Maniacs* (the bible for us metal heads). As usual, there's a long intro.... that slowly becomes a song. The vocals come in, but I'm a bit bored. Is Morgion a doom band? I didn't think so! So why do they sound slow and doom? "Canticle" is the second or third song? I don't know. All I know is that it starts even slower than the previous song! By the time the first chords of "Solinari" are heard... I'm in shock, because I thought Morgion would sound different than what they actually sound like! At times, I wonder if it's Morgion or Anathema! Even Anathema gets to the "nitty-gritty" of a song sooner than Morgion. Next song please! "Nightfall Infernal" is more of the same. "All the Glory, All the Loss" begins differently for a nice change! OK... now I'm pissed, bands / record companies have to make the song tracks clearer. I'm lost! I thought there were only seven songs... but apparently there are more! I don't know... I'm a bit disappointed. Need I say more? **(Relapse)** *Gerry Cummings.*

ALANIS MORISSETTE MTV Unplugged CD

After the success of Jagged Little Pill and Supposed Former Infatuation Junkie, Alanis Morissette released a live album after a debut on MTV Unplugged. The **MTV Unplugged** album successfully attempts to pull together Jagged Little Pill, Supposed Infatuation Junkie, and four new tracks. The acoustic sound of **MTV Unplugged** gives Morissette a completely different sound. At first I was extremely disappointed. As a fan of Jagged Little Pill, I usually anticipate the man hating, revenge searching experience. The **MTV Unplugged** version of Morissette is anything but edgy and angry. Morissette "Unplugged" is similar to the sappy "thank yous" of Supposed Former Infatuation Junkie. Ok, so it grew on me. After listening to it a couple of times, the sappy sound became appropriate. Morissette has a voice that can carry a tune no matter the situation, sound or type of music. In *Ironic* her Canadian accent is prevalent and adds a little more character and spice to the album. Since her first album, Morissette has grown in noticeable amounts. Whether it's heard in her lyrics or voice, it's hard to ignore. The album is an inside view of Morissette for her fans. Each time Morissette releases a new album, she releases another side to her personality yet to be seen. It kind-of makes me wonder what her fans will see in the future. **[Maverick]** *K. Darga.*

MÖTLEY CRÜE Live-Entertainment or Death CD
GUNS N' ROSES Live Era '87-'93 CD

Four CD's of music that, whether you like either group or not, you'll recognize. The Crüe and GNR were two of the biggest bands of the '80s, and these live CD's capture them in all their glory [or lack there of] depending upon your judgment. I think these CDs are testaments to why these bands not only lived up to, but also exceeded, the hype surrounding them. The Crüe album contains material, which was largely recorded 10-15 years ago, back before Vince Neil and Tommy Lee's fiascos. From such classics as, "Live Wire," to popular favorites such as, "Girls, Girls, Girls," "Dr. Feelgood," "Shout at the Devil" and "Primal Scream," to the power ballads, "Home Sweet Home" and "Don't Go Away Mad (Just Go Away)," it's all here. As for the GNR helping, you don't really know when anything was recorded but, judging by the sloppiness, it was largely during their '92 tour with Metallica; it fits with the sound I've heard of that era. Anyway, who said live music was supposed to be precise? All of the favorites are here; including many of the lesser-known tunes off of their incredible first CD, Appetite for Destruction. If you're a fan of that drug-n-sex filled album like me, then this is a must. Both albums are attempts to draw more money from two bands that have been largely silent over the last say five years, and these albums will almost certainly be successful. At least with The Crüe you can see them again, they're still touring, but GNR is no more. If you're a fan of either band you'll want these, although I'm not quite sure how strong the market is for either band's material, because music has changed quite a bit since then. **(Mötley / Beyond) (Geffen)** *P. Hahn.*

MOTOR CITY BURGERS Escape from Detroit CD

While I thoroughly enjoyed this CD, I'm quite sure there will be naysayers swearing that this is juvenile, vulgar and all around offensive. And, in all fairness, the maturity level is roughly that of a 10-year-old telling fart jokes but hey, I still laugh at most of them. Imagine the musical stylings of The Bumpin' Uglies (hardcore punk rock) with the unpredictable insanity of Beavershoot [everywhere from metal to gangsta rap]. In short, 23 tracks that speak to the child in all of us, or at least in me. **(Talking Trash)** *P. Hahn.*

MUDHONEY March to Fuzz 2-CD / 3-LP

This is a "Greatest Hits and Rarities" package from the precursors of the "Seattle sound," and it's full of the good ol'-fashioned tunes that sparked the whole grunge thang. Unlike their followers / contemporaries, Mudhoney was [is?] a garage-charged p-rock band that blew the roof off of most of the venues they played early on. They were the perfect mentors to bands like Nirvana as well as ideal heirs to such legendary NW bands as The Wipers and Sonics. All of Mudhoney's earlier nuggets are here: "Touch Me I'm Sick," "Into the Drink" and "Suck You Dry," and not surprisingly they still shred 10 years after the fact. I'm not going to go into their major label releases / sound, because that's a tired ol' horse to keep on whipping, but this set, especially the band's above-mentioned initial material will get yer juices flowin' like any talented p-rock band can. This is a great release from these pioneers. **[Sub Pop]** *N. Z.*

MUTINY Rum Rebellion CD

Norm, I ought' a Unabomb your POB for this, you scruffy slapdick. In a nutshell: Mutiny is a band (who sound distinctly-freakin'-American) that deliberately has copied the Irish punk style of the Shane MacGowan-era Pogues. Pennywhistles, pipes, bodrahns, songs about drunkenness, nights in an Australian lock-up, women who are acutely challenged in the clean orifice department -- it's all here. What grizzly-chinned bastard would dare to try and sound like Shane MacGowan? I worship the Pogues like fat Italian grandmothers worship the Virgin Mary! These grubs could do plant life a favor and march through a nasty Hispanic section of Miami yelling, "Eva Peron was the anti-Christ!" I'd be bloody obliged as well. C***s. Oh, and you're safe Norm. Just watch out for that burning brown paper bag outside your front door next time your doorbell rings late at night. **(Hell's Ditch)** *Bob Toole.*

MU-ZIQ Royal Astronomy CD

The latest from Mu-Ziq is one of the most intelligent electronic albums I've heard in a long time. First of all, "Scaling" and the "Hwicci Song" contains orchestration from what sounds like a string quartet that's simply breathtaking. Unlike most of music these days that's been played out before it reaches the shelves, Mr. Paradinas made sure that his latest would make a lasting impression on his audience. When I listened to this album, I came to a conclusion that as the album progressed, it rhythmically blended together so as to relate one song to the next as if in some enchanted tale of old. The tracks have dark, driving beats that accompany the tweaks on the effects board and get your body pounding either in your bedroom or the "intrepid dance floor." If you've enjoyed Mu-ziq in the past, or any of Squarpusher or Plug's work, then be sure to get this album because you will enjoy. **(Astralwerks)** *Aaron Moore.*

MESHELL N'DEGECELLO Bitter CD

Hey, you! Yeah you, with the I-can't-spell-my-first-name, first.name. Do you know who Cassandra freakin' Wilson is? You know, the one who just released the Coltrane covers album. No? Well, you bear a remarkable resemblance to her. **[Maverick]** *Bob Toole.*

NOCTURNAL RITES The Sacred Talisman CD

I love the music created by this sextet on this CD. It's also a masterpiece; alongside with Angra's new disc. It's both catchy and heavy. I like the vox and the guitar harmonies. I love the song "Destiny Calls." It is sheer brilliance! Actually, all of the songs are killer, but my heart has a special place for "Destiny Calls." I'm also partial to "Ride On," "Glorious" and "Fire Comes to Ice," to name a few. This is amazing music! All of you metalheads should go out and procure this. I know you won't be disappointed. I'm thinking about going out and getting the other CDs Nocturnal Rites has released! That's proof of how good they are! So, if you want killer guitar harmonies, and a killer metal singer, get Nocturnal Rites, pronto! **[Century Media]** *Gerry Cummings.*

NO MACHISMO Way Too Gigolo CD

Great sound – rough and ragged, lends that 'live' feel. The disc leads off with a humorous track poking fun at techno music, then gets to it. Song titles like "Jolene," "Greasy Ditch" and "Whiskey Jim" may offer an idea of what these guys are all about... something resembling punk rock that just pulled itself out of some backwoods southern bayou. Rough vocals (I hate to say it, but the guy sounds like he's related to Dicky Barrett) add to the sonic pleasure. This is a fun listen. **[Dynagroove]** *Brent Norton.*

NO USE FOR A NAME More Betterness CD

All one needs to hear is the first song on **More Betterness**, and that pretty much generalizes the entire album. This is just straightforward mid-tempo, pop-punk, multi-layered vocals and the occasional sample that'll inform the listener when another song is starting. What else can be said for a band that's put out practically the same album for the last several years? At least they do an abrasive version of The Pogues' "Fairytale of New York" -- thanks to Tilt's Cinder Block for a little help -- that alone deserves a star. **(Fat Wreck Chords)** *Demangis.*

TED NUGENT Great Gonzos! The Best of... CD

Ahhh... it's all coming back to me now. It was circa '77 or '78, just before punk rock came a knockin' and I sold my soul, I was in the 7th or 8th grade in one of Detroit's nondescript suburbs [Warren] and being from the Detroit area I, like brothers and most of my pals were part of the legion of loyal "Nuge" fans cheering the Motor City Madman on to further glory. It was almost an unwritten rule that all young folks at the time denounce disco and follow the likes of "Terrible Ted," KISS, etc. Needless to say, I followed along gladly. My brother and I eagerly bought each new release when it came out. It fit our "lifestyle" perfectly [we were jocks]. Anyway, without meandering further, here it is 20-odd years later, and, surprisingly, I think this still rocks. All of Nugent's material sounds as fresh as it did then. Since he had an earlier career with the Amboy Dukes, you can classify this as the "best of" of his early solo work. All of his hits from 1975 through 1980 are here [with the exception of "Snakeskin Cowboys"]: "Cat Scratch Fever," "Motor City Madman," "Stranglehold," "Wango Tango" and the infamous "Wang Tang Sweet Poontang." All still bring out smiles and head bobs when cranked. This is yet another example of Detroit's pre-eminence in the world of rock-n-roll. Detroit rocks! **[Epic / Legacy]** *N. Zebrowski.*

NUNCHAKU Best of 1993-1998 CD

What, a "Best of" from Nunchaku? Who knew that they actually had any hits? Chances are, they were never given the chance to be played on the radio or MTV. Nunchaku represents ultra-fast, grindcore-ish hardcore, with two singers — one being the guy who uses high pitched screams, while the other growls his little heart out. Despite the occasional metal / hip-hop moment and funky bass line, this "Best of" compilation lives up to its name for an obscure Japanese hardcore moment. **(Howling Bull)** *Demangis.*

PJ OLSSON Words For Living CD

A breathe of fresh air for the singer / songwriter genre, PJ Olsson has life's passion pulsing through his songs, that translates to the listener his eccentric nature in musicianship. When listening to his voice, you can tell that he believes in what he says. An integral part of this album is Olsson's skills in the studio, he create beats for his songs. The beat's always there, and it hooks you in and grabs your attention. It's a mature effort from a young man from right here in Michigan. Usually I wouldn't have applauded this type of music, however because of his confidence in his music, I give him all of my support and love for his work. One of my favorite tracks is "Dandelion" where Olsson makes you feel as if you were floating in a complete vacuum somewhere sublime and fearless. I'd love to see him live because his sound seems as if it could move you. Try it as an after-hours CD at your next party. You'll be sure to catch people's attention and get them in a mood. **(Columbia)** *A. Moore.*

OVERDOSE The Circus of Death CD

I wish some record companies would send better CD's. I'm not sure on the track listing. I don't even know the name of the CD! I'm guessing it's "Overdose." These companies have to start sending CD's with jewel cases, for chrissakes! The CD begins with a fairly heavy song (I think) "The Zombie Factory." "Dead Clouds" starts with circus music before transforming into distorted guitar riffs, then into clean guitar chords, with intense guitars and drums thrown in for good measure. "Profit" has great stop-and-go rhythms. "The Healer" sounds very pretty -- lots of pretty harmonies. "A Good Day To Die" is next and it has a very short intro, before becoming faster. I liked this song the best! But "Powerwish" isn't bad either. "Beyond My Bad Dreams" brings everything to a very cool and heavy conclusion. If you like Brazilian metal, Overdose is for you. **(Pavement)** *G. Cummings.*

OVERKILL Coverkill CD
HELLOWEEN Metal Jukebox CD
V/A The Second Coming...A Millennium Tribute CD

I thought, and still do think, that Overkill's Necroshine is one of the finest metal albums ever made, period. This horrible collection of covers is the exact antithesis of Necroshine. I can't understand how Overkill could have produced such a horrid record. I still think that any true metalhead should get a copy of Necroshine. Do you see a theme developing here? Good, get Necroshine and avoid **Coverkill**. Helloween has been on the precipice for 15 years now and with last year's Better Than Raw it looked like they might just make it over the hump to bigger things. Short story is, it didn't happen and instead of heading back to the studio to record another record of original music, someone convinced Helloween to paste together this collection of covers, bad idea. The momentum they were building with Better Than Raw has been stopped dead with this so-so release. Every track would have served as a nice bonus track on an import or maxi-single, but here it's not very exciting. The covers are either too close to the original [see Helloween's take on David Bowie's "Space Oddity"] or not the best choices for a "Helloweenized" version, Cream's "White Room" for instance. Throwing the rating curve up a bit is the incredible take on Focus's "Hocus Pocus." Nobody has done this one better since the original and God knows 100s have tried. Look for the band to get back on track with their next studio release. Where there is an aspiring rock star there are also endless hours of cover material and paying homage to these younger and less known rockers is **The Second Coming**. This is exciting, truly exciting, because in each track you can feel the hope and conviction that each of these rockers has for making it in big time rock-n-roll. The fact that they've all chosen a musical style that's fairly well out of the commercial mainstream is all the more heartening. With the possible exceptions of The Southern Rock All-stars and American Dog, these bands have no idea what it's actually like to be in the big time. The sex on the bus, the cocaine and beer, managers ripping them off and, if they're lucky, enough cash to afford a Betty Ford's rehab; young, stupid and thoroughly rock-n-roll. Hell, I feel like I am 16 again. Most of the bands try to stick as close as possible to the original; most come off well. There are three performances that stand out from the rest; two are very good, while the third is exceedingly bad. O.C.D. contributes the best track to this '80s tribute with a number culled from the '70s? Still, this is an absolutely brilliant turn on Alice Cooper's "I Love the Dead" and it is sure to get the group some attention in the industry. The world famous and criminally unsigned, Gutterssluts blows out an irreverent version of "Welcome to the Jungle," which sounds better than anything the "new" G-n-R is crapping out. Sadly, there's one genuinely noticeable stinker on this otherwise excellent disc, and it's a version of Motley Crüe's "Kickstart My Heart." It is so bad that it... well... I'll be kind today, it's really bad and by a group that happens to be a Motley Crüe cover band, go figure. So, in summation, avoid the Overkill CD. Get a copy of Helloween if you're a big time fan of the band [or of Focus] and steal **Second Coming** if that's what is required. **[CMC International] [Sanctuary] [Versailles]** *David Lee.*

PERPLEXA The Sun and the Moon Getting It On CD
SKY CRIES MARY Seeds CD

Both CD's struck me as quite similar; from how they were arranged, to the music and to similar weird themes that I didn't get. First up, the arrangements. Both were planned out to the minutest detail. Nothing is left out of place unless it was planned. It's similar to how Alfred Hitchcock planned out every shot to be perfect in his movies. The music, while not exactly alike, feels the same way. You sense it; it doesn't come out and attack you, and this slowly draws you in and refuses to let you go. It's almost as if it's calling out to something deeper inside you than the plain raw animal frenzy of most music. Even though this sticks into that vein, it takes a deeper route. As for their themes, I've got the feeling that both might be helped by large doses of mind altering substances, but I've yet to try that approach. Although I plan on getting completely drunk [*when don't you? ed.*] when listening to both to get a better understanding, when I do that, I tend not to remember much. The Perplexa CD is worth it for the perverse cover art alone [sun and moon getting it on], as well as they are extremely nice gents, good luck in LA boys. The SCM disc includes a short film by Roderick Romero, which accompanies the second track, "Chickaboom Cocktail." I didn't get the movie either. Both bands remind me of Lansing's own Calliope, I don't get them much either, but at times I like them as well. **(Small Stone) (Collective Fruit Inc.)** *P. Hahn.*

PEZZ Warmth & Sincerity CD

This here's hard-edged, abrasive, melodic punk. Think No Use For A Name with guts and looking for a fight. The leads and melodies stretch out like 80's bands that weren't in such a hurry to make a buck, but still played fast. **Warmth & Sincerity** is maybe a little more polished than their last LP, or maybe PEZZ (scary thought here) has grown up a bit. Maybe it's a little of both? That's what I'm hoping for. Good stuff, check it out. **(BYO)** *Fike.*

PLATEAU Spacecake CD

Exactly what one has come to expect from cEvin Key. There are lush, melodic tapestries that slowly build to a frenzied pace, before slowly bringing you back down. It's reminiscent of late FLA, Karma and in general a lot of the stuff that's coming out on Project. Not to label this Goth, but a lot of the electronica that has been emerging lately is pretty good at skewing the line. This would be great to study to. **(Metropolis)** *P. Hahn.*

PRETTY MIGHTY MIGHTY Famous Past Lives CD

Where do I start? The riot act would be spot-on. Four guys from Columbus, Ohio -- a major college town. Which means their sound (it really pains my kidneys to write this sentence) has been developed in, and reflects, the carefree, uninhibited -- dare I say it? May the gods look with forgiving eye upon my offspring! -- rebellious environment of the American College Student. The aforementioned ACS knows all about innovative barrier breaking pop music. I can just see these guys after "the gig," leaning against the basement wall at some frat chump's party, telling the dormitory confined freshman chicks how jiggy it was playing last year's Hash Bash behind the student union building. Past lives these lads will someday have, but fame? Stupid slapdicks. **(Derailleur)** *Bob Toole.*

PRIMUS Antipop CD

In a year full of god-awful music, Primus could not have come up with a better name for an album. In a year where perfectly chiseled boy bands, Barbie doll singers and Rap-Rockers dominated, it's hard to believe there's stillroom for Primus. **Antipop** packs a wallop with its girth, where their last two albums failed miserably. The general wanderings of Tales From The Punch Bowl, and the downright blandness of The Brown Album, kept Primus out of the spotlight. **Antipop** sports a number of guest appearances: Fred Durst (Limp Bizkit), Tom Morello (Rage Against The Machine), Stewart Copeland (Police) and Tom Waits, all pitch in. But the true genius on this record is, of course, Les Claypool. His slaphappy bass lines sound better than ever. From the tumultuous "Lacquer

Head" to the Pink Floyd-influenced "Eclectic Electric;" the Funk-Thrash is still there. Tom Waits' nicotine-drenched gravelly howl provides perfect vocals for "Coattails of a Dead Man." This is the second time Waits has collaborated with Primus. The other one is the now classic anthem "Tommy the Cat." The title track's lyrics sum up Primus's long career: "*I am the Antipop / I'll run against the grain until the day I drop / I am the Antipop / the man you can not stop.*" Les's statement provides a little glimmer of hope in times of bad music. Long time fans should note that the hidden track is a long time concert staple. **Antipop** shows a good return to form for Primus. I was afraid we might've lost them in that big sea of cheese. **[Interscope]** *Chris Wardell.*

THE PUSH KINGS Let's Get it On! CD

When Rage Against the Machine debuted back around 1992, their groundbreaking methods of fusing metal, hip-hop, anger and a heavy political backdrop succeeded in merging two completely opposite genres, where many others failed in their attempts (anyone remember The Hard-Cores or the *Judgment Night* Soundtrack with its two good songs?). Unfortunately, Rage also gets the credit for spawning a new generation of bands attempting to ride on the coat tails of their success; and in the process, dumb it down for all those who feel that Rage's use of using words with more than two syllables is too complicated. What's worse is that there are bands like The Push Kings who rip off other bands who rip off the founders of this genre (Korn, Limp Biscuits, etc). **(Fantastic Plastic)** *Demangis.*

QUASI Field Studies CD

Take a divorced couple that sings about broken hearts, disillusionment, life and love's cruel intentions to each other and you get Quasi. Sleater-Kenney drummer Janet Weiss and keyboard / guitarist Sam Coomes create a medley of amazing melodies with just drum and instrument while Coomes writes some of the most searing, ironic, poetic and interesting lyrics open to interpretation of any modern writer. The guy should be writing poetry, except there is no money or notoriety in that these days. It hits you right away with the first song: "*I'm not going to give it up for free anymore and I don't really care if you label me a whore.*" Sparked by the idea of selling his soul to the devil for fame and fortune in "A Fable With No Moral," the devil replies "*that is not yours to sell.*" Having no morals is the moral. Freedom is up for grabs in "Birds": "*Free as a bird or is that just a word. Oh, to be free, to free myself from me.*" "*How many hours can a minute hold,*" asks Coomes in "Me And My Head." In "All The Same" he sings "*You worship the future like it's some kind of saint but it's just like the past with a new coat of paint.*" The lyrics apply to modern music. "Smile" contains hopeless lyrics about the mundane direction of modern suburban life. Janet Weiss contributes "2 By 2," a beautiful but brief romantic postmortem. Elliott Smith contributes bass on some songs to fill out the sound. **Field Studies** was also released as a limited edition 3-sided vinyl release with engravings by Sam and Janet on side D. For more info check out www.quasi.com **[Up]** *Allen Salyer.*

QUEEN BEE Fine... 7"

The b-side is an apt title for a Queen Bee song, as the entire metro area, or at least the "cool" people are absolutely smitten with just about anything Karen Neal does. Not to say that this isn't well deserving of praise, it's a fine rock album, but it isn't the next coming as some other publications have stated. Hard rock that has enough stings to make you remember it, but not enough to make you hate the bee. **(Alternative Tentacles)** *P. Hahn.*

RADIUM Burn CD

Burn is nice and loud right out of the box, an album full of desire. "*Evil thoughts are racing through my mind. Evil thoughts of you and I,*" sings Tabitha Predovich, the guitars in the opening "Evil Thoughts" punctuate her seductive voice. She wants to give you what you deserve. "Across The Blue Sky" is a sultry come-on of awakened desire. She's hot for you, but is it too late? The guitar's wah-wah pedal sounds like the wind in a cyclone. "Out Of Sight" evokes desire, hers and yours. "*I lost it all today.*" He may be gone, but that hasn't stopped her from dreaming about him. The chorus has beautifully collapsing vocals. I also liked the super percussive, "Shake It." Shake it indeed, with spinning cymbals and a beat that'll make your head bob. "Long Drive," reminds me of Lush / 4AD wall of sound composition. "*This is the price I must pay for the way I feel about you today.*" He's left and she feels cold and empty. Do you feel the desire to go out and buy this album? **[Mad Queen]** *A.S.*

RAMMSTEIN Live Aus Berlin CD

I think it's a bit too early for a live album from Rammstein... but hey! Who am I, right? If you like these guys, then you probably already have this. I will tell you a couple of things though: the cheers and whistles sound as fake as those on Dokken's Beast from the East album. If you listen to "Sehnsucht," it's almost like listening to the "album version." The only thing that seems "live" is the vocals; the rest seems like a tape. I don't know? There's not much I can say about this. I don't understand German, so I can't even tell you what they're singing about. Next! **(Motor / Mercury)** *G. Cummings.*

REACH THE SKY So Far From Home CD

It's always nice to see that there are still a few hardcore bands out there that don't succumb to high levels of testosterone and hard guy poses. Take Reach The Sky for example, they totally reflect upon the posi-core / youth crew scene of New York circa 1988. None of this, however, is from a retro perspective of how things use to be back in the day, rather, **So Far From Home** is an attempted rebirth, installing the high energy, positive aggression of hardcore (ala Youth of Today and Gorilla Biscuits [at times one could swear that Civ himself picked up the mic]), while at the same time, trying to erase the jock mentality that a majority of this genre has evolved into. And even if Reach For The Sky try their darndest to reinstate the old school ethics of maintaining optimism, unity and benefiting their world around them (in this case, donating time to charities involved in helping missing or abused children), watching them try is inspirational enough for them to deserve props. **(Victory)** *Demangis.*

RED GIANT Ultra-Magnetic Glowing Sound CD

Powerful chords that hit you like a shotgun blast right in the chest, I'm talking huge riffs. But beyond all that it holds quite a melody that soothes, as well as sears, your flesh. The vocals cross the styles of Eddie Vedder and Scott Weiland to create a unique voice that laces the acid-induced backdrop of psycho-delic guitars and drums. To be honest with you, I sat here trying to think of all the reasons why this is a solid album, but concluded with the question, "What is a good album?" If this album wasn't worth your time, I'd probably never have started this review. The breakdown: go check em' out, you might just get a new favorite. **(MIA / Tee Pee)** *A. M.*

PAUL RISHELL AND ANNIE RAINES Moving the Country CD

Basically, this CD is a lot of fun. Rishell lays down nice steel guitar tracks, Annie Raines blows the harmonica so hard and well, and both of them have good voices. The song choices are a fair sampling of what the blues has to offer and the arrangements are original and surprising. But does anyone else ever get the feeling that eclecticism (which is the backbone of this album) is just a little bit mechanical and calculated? **[Tone-Cool]** *Joyner.*

MICHAEL ROSE Bonanza CD

Reggae's "Ruff Roze" again shows strong. Rose's fourth (excluding remixes, etc.) Heartbeat studio/original outing (fifth since leaving Black Uhuru, with whom he won a Grammy) is full of hope and promise. Still angry and militant, but with a more positive vibe, **Bonanza** further refines the Rose sound. Swaggering, sentimental, tough, rebellious but disciplined, strident, and maybe a little reformed by time, this LP takes all the styles (roots, dancehall, pop, reggae) and synthesizes them. With Uhuru, Rose lashed out, striving for mass-approval; while The Wailers (Peter Tosh, Bob Marley) beat them to the punch singing "Get Up/Stand Up," you had the feeling Black Uhuru might have meant it more. On **Bonanza**, with songs like "Revolution," "We All Need Love," "Ganja Bonanza," "Rock With Somebody," and others, Rose takes the familiar themes of oppression, isolation and rejection, and turns them into uplifting modern pieces of righteous realism. The occasional appropriate horn and/or drum sample (something which Rose has avoided until recently) work very well in making **Bonanza** ear-easy for the non-reggae-ready. Put this album right next to Rose's 1995 effort, Be Yourself and see if it stacks up. Bet it does. **(Heartbeat)** *Fike.*

THE RUSTY NAILS ...No Miracle In Ruins CD

The press kit cites The Who, Black Flag, Fugazi and the Pogues as influences. These influences seem disconnected, and even opposing, no? Oh, yeah, something about bagpipes (I'm thinking, "Oh no..."). Bagpipes, the Pogues.... give me some Valium and let me drown myself in the tub. Thankfully, it's not nearly as bad as it *could* be. True, the "annoyance" element is strong at times, but there's a cool vibe going on here. I hear the Fugazi and Pogues influences shining through. A few songs have that strident, defiant sound of "Baba O'Reilly" or "Love Reign O'er Me," with acoustic / harmonic interludes, others have that stop-start, hang-on-one-note type of thing happening, making The Who comparisons palpable. I almost forgot the violin, which believe it or not, isn't totally cheesy! The Rusty Nails isn't for everyone, but they seem pretty cool to me, and that's all that matters... um... to me. **(Coolidge)** *Fike.*

SACRAMENTUM Thy Black Destiny CD

From the beginning chords of "Iron Winds," I knew that metal was alive and well. Sacramentum, while not a very original name (remember Michigan's best metal band ever named Sacramental?), are a force to be reckoned with. At times they sound like an updated / younger version of Slayer, but they're still pretty cool, just listen to a track like "Demonaeon." After listening to the album, there's a familiarity to some of the riffs... Could it have something to do with Andy LaRoque (King Diamond's guitarist for the past 15 years) producing the album? Did he have a say in the harmonies used by Sacramentum? I don't know, but I definitely like this CD! **(Century Media)** *Gerry Cummings.*

SATYRICON Rebel / Extravaganza CD

I am actually not quite sure what the title of the CD is. Since I got one of those promotional CD's without lyrics and jewel case, I couldn't tell! Well, in any case, I've wanted to listen to Satyricon for a long time. Here's my chance... and it's blowing me away! Man! These guys are fast and heavy! Again, something that Dark Forest would love. Actually, Dark Forest sound a lot like these guys of Satyricon. Who's imitating whom? I love some of the songs and their titles: "Filth Grinder" and "Rhapsody in Filth" (is this a hit on Cradle Of Filth?). Don't get me wrong; I also liked the other song titles. I love songs like "End of Journey" and "The Scorn Torrent;" because of their sheer evil and heaviness. If you're into *real metal*, then get Satyricon. **[Nuclear Blast]** *Gerry Cummings.*

SEVEN FOOT SPLEEN Enter Therapy CD

This makes me wanna writhe around in the mud nekked. Sludgy heavy riffs with dying death metal-ish vox. Some of it is as dark as can be and at other times just heavy, heavy And HEAVY. With songs like: "It Smells," "Leech Eater," "Joy of the Worm" and "Clean Catch Urine Specimen," you metal fans can't go wrong. Don't listen to this CD while doing dishes; you may smash your head on the kitchen counter.... if ya know what I mean. **(Tee Pee / MIA)** *C. O.*

THE SEWERGROOVES Songs from the Sewer CD

This is yet another fine release from Sweden. This CD features the Hellacopters drummer Robert and, if you're a fan of them, you'll dig this. It's slightly more Stooge-ish then the 'Copters, not that that's a bad thing, just an observation. Loud, trashy and blatantly in your face, this is everything rock-n-roll should be. **(Estrus)** *P. Hahn.*

SHOTGUN WEDDING A Big World Of Fun CD

Shotgun Wedding features Lynn Canfield [formerly with Moon Times Seven], with a roots-rock sound similar to the Cowboy Junkies, with the addition of vibes. A friend is demoted from riding shotgun and is now stuck in the back seat in "Shotgun." She's dancing with the devil in "Mister Creepy." "Nerves Of Steel" features slide guitar and nice vocals daring you to "*take your foot off the brake.*" "Inside Only Cat" is Morcheeba-like jazz. "*You can lick my face, mutilate my arm, but I'll never share your dream of outside.*" The way the song is written, she could be singing about her cat or her lover, a boy she's afraid to lose to the temptations in the outside world. "Will We Love It" sings about crushes and unrequited love: "*The passion of the kiss that never happens.*" Can the real thing come anywhere near expectations? **[Warner Brothers]** *A. Salyer.*

SHALLOW Jumping Away from Something Exploding CD

With a blast of the guitar and farfisa, Shallow kicks into the title song **Jumping Away From Something Exploding** in grand low-fi, but big sound splendor. Wearing an early Stereolab influence on their sleeve, Shallow play music that is bright and beautiful. Lead singer Julie Shields has a voice similar to the lead singer from the Sundays, a tiny voice that shimmers in its eloquence. **Jumping Away...** features five new songs by Shallow and four live numbers. It's a great introduction to a band that should have a very exciting future. The studio numbers include "So Sentimental" and "Where the Evening Went," two glowingly warm ballads that sway with interesting rhythms and words that have the power to bring forth real tears. The live tracks have their own value, as "Missile Command" ends with "Cheerleader Nurses," a nine-minute plus instrumental that gives the band members their chance to show off. Then, for cover fans, they offer the Cure's "Push" and extend it out a few minutes. Shallow wraps things up with "Shoot the Drummer," which is their unusual take on "The Little Drummer Boy." **(Devil In the Woods)** *Mike Pfeiffer.*

BREE SHARP A Cheap And Evil Girl CD

Turn your obsession into a mega-hit. "*I got it bad for David Duchovny. David Duchovny, why won't you love me? Some guys get into music to meet chicks. I got into the business to meet David Duchovny,*" confesses Bree Sharp. Not since Bananarama's "Robert DeNiro Calling" has a song paid tribute to a movie star and launched a career. "*American Heathcliff, why won't you love me?*" seems to me to be perfect words: his television character Fox Mulder digs up the strange and unexpected; Heathcliff digs up the love of his life after she croaks. "*David Duchovny I know you could love me. I'm sweet and I'm cuddly - I'm gonna kill Scully!*" What we have here is a stalker in the making. If you're not a fan of the X-Files, you can think of the song as a statement of modern alienation, of blurring the line between hero worship and obsession or a critique of America's obsession with celebrity. Bree Sharp's voice is like Natalie Merchant, only fuller and more emotive. Influenced by singer-songwriters like Elvis Costello, Patti Smith and Patty Griffin, her music is folk-based rock with new wave callbacks. "Faster, Faster" is a comment on trash culture, with homage to B-movie director Russ Meyer, creator of many big-boob psycho flicks including "Faster Pussycat, Kill Kill." The click-clack rhythm track is like a high-speed train crossing a bridge. "*Faster, Faster, I'm a trashy motorcycle beauty. The road is all I've ever known. Faster Faster, I'm the star in this disaster movie and in the end I ride* *alone.*" She attacks the crassness of capitalism and skinny models in "America." Pulp fiction detective novels inspired the title track, "The Cheap And Evil Girl," novels. She uses men and discards them. "*The cheap and evil girl wears you like a locket. She's polished every pearl then she put you in her pocket.*" Sinister chords and creepy organ complete the film noir feel. "Guttermouth" complains about a foul-mouthed woman. "*Chick's mouth full of asterisks. Guttermouth, she spits on every curb and she flips the boys the bird. She grabs her crotch in public. She's got tons of DNA but all they see is T&A.*" She might be crude, but she can hold her own when men harass her. There are some honest tracks, juxtaposing bitter reality against her fun, fantasy songs: "Smitten" is another crush song, "Fallen" is a tale of lost faith and hope, hurt by greed in "Fool's Gold," hurt by mistrust in "Show Me" and being strung along in "Not Your Girl." **[Trauma]** *Allen Salyer.*

SIANSPHERIC Else CD

Talk about an original sound? Imagine crossing an ambient band – ethereal and evocative – with the slow thud and distortion of Budd Oven on some of the songs. The mostly electronic music itself is haunting, as if floating out of the speakers in a way much like a specter. There's also a dreamy quality to the music that lingers long after playing. This is excellent music that's been superbly produced, and stands far above the fray. If ambient music [with a twist] is your bag, you need this CD immediately. **[Sonic Unyon]** *N. Zebrowski.*

THE SILENCERS Cyclerific Sounds CD

Here are 12 more tracks of surf mayhem, from the Motor City's baddest and best surf trio. If you like biker movies, stag films, cheap beer and peeping into a co-ed's window, then this is for you. There's enough feedback off of the bass and guitar to drown an army, plus the simplest of drum beats, makes this one of a few truly great surf bands. I'm sure most of you are already hip to what is one of Detroit's best-kept secrets. The Silencers have done it again. **(Total Energy)** *P. Hahn.*

SIN ROPAS Three Cherries CD

This is an excellent stripped-down pop record that almost borders the singer / songwriter category. Packed with emotion, both musically and lyrically, this CD pulls at your heartstrings and holds them until it's over. It's also the kind of CD you'll be thinking about every time after playing. Keep an eye on Sin Ropas because I think they could be huge! **[Perishable]** *N. Zebrowski.*

SIXTEEN DELUXE The Moonman is Blue CD-EP

Anyone out there pining over the demise of "New Wave" back in the early '80s should snap this up. Although not strictly new wave, this EP has a feel that sounds very much like early '80s pop, albeit with today's technology. Imagine if Elastica was around in the late '70s, etc., and you'll get a pretty good idea about the way this sounds. This EP is simply fun, fun, fun! **[Sugar Fix]** *N. Zebrowski.*

THE SLAGS Never Surrender 7"

This is pretty sweet punk rock, with very energetic recording and the vox aren't over-bearing. And what the Slags lack in originality they more than make up for in their delivery. This is the kind of music that makes me want to go out and do some good old fashion hell raisin'; which you should be doing as you go buy this 7". **[Red Star]** *Tom Muth.*

SLAVES The Devil's Pleasures CD

I snagged this disc because it had a cool cover. And as an intuitive reviewer, I was right. This disc contains a combo of Goth / industrial music that has been lacking from the music scene since around 1988. They combine synths and drum loops, over floating guitars and shouted vocals. It hasn't been since the March Violets / Sisters Of Mercy / Sisterhood era that this kind of music has been made. This is a Goth album for all those who remember SDC. If you can find it, you'll like it. **(Troubleman Unlimited)** *P. Hahn.*

SNAPCASE Designs For Automation CD

It happens all the time. Ever since the first Cro-Magnon human beat a dirt pocket with a stick and made the first drum beat, music has been constantly reinventing itself. Every year or so a band rises from the pile and ups the ante. Some bands have the ability to recreate the process with every release, while others fester in a sea of mediocrity and musical plagiarism. Syracuse, NY's Snapcase have once again made it that much more difficult for other bands to release an original piece of material. In 1998, Sweden's Refused rewrote the book on punk / hardcore by adding elements of techno, jazz and highly melodic punk thus placing them atop the pile of hipster hardcore coolness. Snapcase has taken the challenge very seriously. **Designs For Automation**, to be released in late January of 2000, is a more focused and cohesive aural attack than '97's Progression Through Unlearning. Progression... was an aggressive outcropping of severely sharp guitar riffs and hardcore grooves served up on a steaming plate of frustration and contempt. While brilliant unto itself, the album now serves as on-ramp onto the mature and tighter wound groove and emotion of **Designs For Automation**. The new album finds a more diverse Snapcase, one that has discovered that sometimes, nothing says more than every thing, and not every moment of the music needs to be filled with blazing intensity. While still invoking feelings of self-actualization and optimistic alternative thinking, the band is helping to provide the tools needed when opening the windows of reality and solutions. Emotional and intelligent content aside, **Designs...** is a non-stop, 30-minute ride of wholesome hardcore goodness that doesn't leave behind the Snapcase who penned "Lookingglassself," but merely expands it. Without going too far, the band knows how to lock onto each other's styles, to create what might be the most driving album of 2000 and fill the cup of even the hardiest of all hardcore fans. Not too worry; this is no pigeonholed musical prophecy of the hardcore life, but rather an aggressive exploration of the heavier side of music. The fortitude of a band that can top this will not be seen for quite some time. **(Victory)** *David J. Ciancio.*

SNOG Third Mall from the Sun CD

Snog is David Thrussell, an Australian electronic artist that also records as SOMA and Black Lung. Snog is David's industrial-electronic dance project and, maybe, his most accessible. But, that isn't to say Snog isn't packed with experimentation and innovative ideas. Each song on **Third Mall...** is a work of electronic pop art, as Snog uses snippets of sound, samples and his unique vocal to create a tapestry of sound. Snog likes to vary the flavor of every song but a few things stand out, like the dark percussion, some strange acoustic effects and his astounding mixing capabilities. The concept behind **Third Mall...** is to paint today's consumer in the ugliest light possible. With song titles like, "Are You Normal Enough?" "Slide Into Extinction" and "Land of the Bland" it's easy to get the idea that Mr. Thrussell has a few gripes with today's money hungry society. Where Snog gets bonus points is the crafty sense of humor portrayed in both the lyrics and the fantastic CD booklet. In short, Snog's **Third Mall...** is one of the best electronic releases I've had the pleasure of listening to. **(Metropolis)** *Mike Pfeiffer.*

SONS OF OTIS Temple Ball CD

Thick like last year's milk. This CD has layers that most bands can't even imagine reaching. I'm not sure if I agree with what the press kit says about this CD, I'm not sure "Psychedelic Space Blues Doom" would be the words that I'd use, but to each their own. Musically, it falls into the Black Sabbath / Deep Purple-style of long, melodic rockers. Of the current generation of bands, The Melvins and Buzzoven come to mind. If you like your metal layered so much that it makes Metallica look like a power ballad band, this CD is for you. **(Man's Ruin)** *P. Hahn.*

SOULWAX Much Against Everyone's Advice CD

Although I'm not a big fan of Beck or Ben Folds Five, they're the only bands I can liken to Soulwax, but I like this at the same time. It's really working digressively on my therapy sessions. I know that what I hear on this album is great, but when I hear certain elements of their music, I hear similarities to bands that I really don't enjoy. They have a great way of weaving acoustics and mellow electronica into a palatable and digestible entrée. Sound weird? Most of the CD is gentle and relaxing with catchy melodies, but there are a couple of tracks that kinda break loose and rock out. This is a definite example of over-production; in that they could never reproduce this live, in a smaller venue, without spending $500,000 on extra musicians. Yes, they do have strings on a few tracks. I guess a keyboard could reproduce the sound, but do they need strings in the first place? Maybe. I've never really been a fan of strings in a song because they don't rock, but I might be persuaded to in this case. Overall, this is a very good album, especially if you like the aforementioned bands. However, even if you're into a more indie feel to your music, they will impress you as well. **[ALMO Sounds]** *Danny Vendetta.*

SPACESCAPE One Point Zero CD

This incredible CD features synthesized-based electronica at its best. Bordering on ambient at times, this disc provides enough beats to get yer rump shakin', if you know what I mean; although its themes are on the somber side. Perfect night music, complete with borderline scary samples that I'm sure you'll enjoy. And they're from Detroit – who'da thunk it? Bravo to all involved! **[Big Hero / Electronik Palette]** *Norman Zebrowski.*

SPAZZ Crush Kill Destroy CD

Spazz has had to have recorded and released at least a couple hundred songs prior to **Crush Kill Destroy**. And despite the perpetual flow of records since '93, they haven't changed one bit. Aside from progressing musically in terms of going beyond the predictable verse / chorus / verse / breakdown / verse method (which gets very old, very quickly), it's always been the same multi-growling / screaming, humor filled, start / stop motion power-violence; so inspiring that a whole new genre of hardcore was spawned (whether or not they're proud of it was never officially determined). So, on Spazz's third album, their reign continues to give mucho props to hip-hop, skateboarding and anti-theology, while scaring the backpacks off of overly sensitive emo kids. To say the least, Spazz hasn't changed a bit and, hopefully, the self-proclaimed "6-crazy fists" won't ever. This CD features 25 songs in 19 minutes. **(Slap-A-Ham)** *Demangis.*

RONNIE SPECTOR She Talks To Rainbows CD EP

The woman who made "Be My Baby" has come out with a new five-song EP on Kill Rock Stars, her first solo record since '87. She proves that she still has an amazing voice, using her patented descending "oh-oh-oh" choruses. Joey Ramone wrote "She Talks To Rainbows" and it sounds like a Ramones song, and Spector's vocals are a definite improvement. There's a duet with Joey Ramone and, depending on whether or not you like Joey's voice, it will determine if you like the song. Ramone is also the producer, which might explain his presence. She's stellar on the Johnny Thunders' classic "You Can't Put Your Arm Around A Memory," performing it as if she was singing directly to Thunders himself. "Don't Worry Baby" was written by Brian Wilson specifically for Ronnie Spector and it closely parallels "Be My Baby." Wilson has Spector's style down pat. The EP closes with a live version of "I Wish I Never Saw The Sunshine" recorded in Japan with full orchestration and back-up singers. When I heard the line "*I wish I never seen the sunshine 'cause then I wouldn't mind the rain,*" I thought it was perfect for Seattle, the home of Kill Rock Stars. **[Kill Rock Stars]** *Allen Salyer.*

STARS AND STRIPES Shaved for Battle CD

This is generic sounding American Oi. There has been very little good American Oi! This CD doesn't improve the track record of American Oi. The songs are OK, the playing is OK, it's all just OK and so, unless you're looking for some background Oi, I'd pass on this. **(Taang!)** *Eric Reanimator.*

STEEL PULSE Living Legacy CD

It's really hard to go wrong with Steel Pulse. Over the past 20-some years, they've grown musically from their foundation, which at its inception was pretty damn solid. They've weathered label storms (five or so labels and counting), international (being from England) reggae politics prejudice and have come out on top. Despite a few rocky line-up changes and style experiments, they've survived, flourished, and maintained their idealism. They've constantly toured (though they missed Detroit for almost a year-and-a-half at one point) over their career, and they've consistently sold out venues that the likes of Jewel, KD Lang and Laurie Anderson *haven't*. This live CD chronicles their recent tours, taking tracks from visits to France, Holland and Puerto Rico, focusing on more recent material from Rage & Fury and Vex, but also showcasing such mega hits as "Bodyguard," "Klu Klux Klan" and others. Throughout, Pulse's sound is as bouncy and defiant as ever. "Medley Medley" nicely combines many of their earlier classics, avoiding the hurried and clichéd "greatest hits" type of medley that so many artists seem to opt for. In all, **Living Legacy** is a nice-nice boomshot for Steel Pulse's legion of followers, reggae fans in general, and whoever else dares to listen. Interested listeners might also reference *Reggae Centennial: Live in Paris (Elysee Momarte)* and *Smash Hits* as well. **(Tuff Gong / Wise Man Doctrine)** *Fike.*

STORMANDSTRESS s/t CD

Unrefined, endearing, but perfectly pristine in the same breath because every pluck of the guitar, every hiss, every wavering voice, every beat of the drum has its place. The best music is the kind that produces a mental association, or a memory. I picture an early morning road trip after a heavy snowfall, fighting the frost on my windshield as my car travels alone down the highway, the first time I had ever really listened to this album. Stellar recording and percussion. **(Touch & Go)** *R. Overmyer.*

STORMTROOPERS Of DEATH Bigger than the Devil CD

The Stormtroopers Of Death are back! After a very long time, the freaks are back! Billy, Dan, Scott and Charlie have revived Sergeant D, and are out for blood again. This album is definitely part two of the now infamous album, Speak English Or Die. I like it! I definitely like it! As a matter of fact, I wouldn't mind if Scott and Charlie kill Anthrax. Danny forgot about whatever band he was in, and Billy takes this seriously (and also put out of its misery MOD), so that way S.O.D. is a real band and can gig and record album after album. There are 23 songs in all included in this album, so I will only tell you the ones I like the most: "Kill the Assholes," "The Song That Don't Go Fast," "Aren't You Hungry?" and "Celtic Frosted Flakes." I am glad this album was released. Long live Sergeant D and S.O.D.! **(Nuclear Blast)** *Gerry Cummings.*

S.O.D. Seasoning the Obese CD EP

Billy Milano and the rest of S.O.D. continue on in their quest to violate every known heavy metal copyright with this two song, 7-minute, goof fest; their tribute to Slayer. McDonald's and Wendy's will have to get in line behind all the rest for their day in court, and we can only hope that the judge will play this CD in open court as evidence. This is fun for fans, but worthless to anyone else. **[Nuclear Blast]** *David Lee.*

THE STAR ROOM BOYS Why Do Lonely Men and Women Want to Break Each Others' Hearts CD

When lead singer Dave Marr admits, "*I've been all around / and I know how to be a woman's kind of man...*" on the CD's title track, you know he's exploring dangerous territory. In fact, there isn't a happy note on this entire disc, but it's a sublime adventure through the world of the brokenhearted. The Star Room Boys are a straight-country honky-tonk outfit from Georgia, featuring great pedal steel and lead guitar work driving the terrific songwriting. The two guitarists often sound at odds, like petulant children sparring for attention. But most of the songs are mid-to-slow tempo, and Marr's singing is somewhere between the pained howl of Richard Buckner and the stately tone of Merle Haggard, an obvious band influence. So basically whatcha got here is serious drinking music. "*I can't believe I ever woke up without her here before*" begins the CD's opening number, "Gastonia," a tale of woe in which our fearless protagonist hops in his car and goes looking for his girl as she drives (he thinks) to her hometown -- "*But if she don't want to be found in that little redneck town I'll be cryin' to her mama when the sun goes down today.*" Dangerous territory indeed, but a fun ride nonetheless. **(Checkered Past)**. *Tom Hirsbrunner.*

STRATOVARIUS Destiny CD

What can I say about Stratovarius that hasn't been said yet? First, I'd like to thank Matt for giving me this CD. It kicks ass! Wow! Now I know what type of music Stratovarius plays, if you want a taste of the type of "epic" and "classic" metal these guys play, listen to the title track song, "Destiny." Man! The gods have arrived! I love the guitar, the singing and the riffs! Everything -- everything! This is one of the best CD's of '99, if not *The Best One*! I can hardly wait to get my hands on The Best of Stratovarius. I've missed many things! Getting back to the songs, I like the harpsichord-sounding riff from "SOS," along with good back-up vocals. "No Turning Back" starts with a killer guitar riff and killer drums. I remember! This song has the amazing guitar harmonies! Yeah baby, yeah! "Rebel" also has a killer riff that reminds me of Yngwie. Then something happens, the energy slightly decreases when the guys play slower tunes. Then "Anthem of the World" and "Cold Winter Nights" appears to save the day. Don't get me wrong, I like the slower stuff... but my heart likes the faster, heavy stuff. Get this CD fast! **[Noise]** *Gerry Cummings.*

SUBSTANCE D Addictions CD

The very first song, "This Devil Inside," had me worried for a minute: Not another band that abuses samples and their intros! I hate that! Well, I hate the first song...'cause when the second one begins, "Everyday," so does the good stuff. Substance D is a bona fide heavy band...but they're not really metal. Well, maybe they're metal, but they're different from bands like Helloween and Blind Guardian. They're more "street." Anyway, if you're into this style, you should obtain this. I also liked the song "who am I." Well... I hope that I've given you an idea about them. **[Noise]** *Gerry Cummings.*

SUNNY DAY REAL ESTATE Live CD

Okay, so I'm still a pathetic geek. If you were ever granted a rare tour of my geekdom, you'd be ashamed at what one may find. Yes, I still collect comic books. Action figures sit gloriously on shelves and Star Wars is still cool in my book. I take my nerdiness very seriously. The same applies to my Sunny Day Real Estate albums. Most Sunny Day fans you see are probably of the hooded-sweatshirt variety, tote hip packs and sip soy lattes. You may even see a black "X" on some hands brandishing the straightedge mark. I label these kids the "fill in the Gap" fans for the coolness factor. Possibly taking a chapter from the "How to be Hip at a Show" book, or "Emo for Dummies." Most people go to meet the requirement of seeing every emo band possible. These are also the fans scoffing at SDRE's new **Live** album. The truly obsessive Real Estaters will stick to their guns through thick and thin. Despite lacking vocals, a screeching voice and a poor set list is no excuse for taking a rain check. Maybe vocalist Jeremy Enigk had one-too-many Camel Lights that day? Maybe he forgot to put honey into his tea? These things happen, my fine-feathered friends. I'll admit the lack of effort displayed gets a C+, but their honesty gets an A. SDRE has never been a band to run with the grain, as you can tell by this album being recorded in Oregon. Most of the CD is comprised of material from their latest album How It Feels To Be Something On. At moments you almost believe it's an MTV Unplugged album. Guitarist Dan Hoerner reigns over "J'Nuh" and "Circles" will induce minor chills. The ice-cold vocal delivery of Enigk finally melts away in the heart wrenching, achromatic, "Guitar and Video Games." "Every Shinning Time You Arrive" continues Sunny Day's search for an understanding of a loved one. When Enigk croons, "*Your tearing me down every time you smile / every shinning time you arrive,*" might be the **Live** album's truly breathtaking moment. The rest is just filler. SDRE's new album can be compared to a slice of pizza: not great, but still tasty. I don't know, maybe I'm biased and shallow, but this, of course, is a must have for fans; the geeks of the world. By the way, if anyone has an extra copy of Batman #51 [*Norm, this means you!, kk.*], give me a call please. **[Sub Pop]** *Chris Wardell.*

SUN RED SUN Lost Tracks CD

This is probably the fourth release that I've reviewed with essentially the same material on it -- and I still love it. This time out there are no tracks with Ray Gillen at all, vocals are handled by current Royal Hunt vocalist, John West, and handled very well I might add. Should you have these songs elsewhere, you'll still want to get this version, as it comes off much more as an album than a collection of tracks and the "tribute feel" of the other releases is gone because, as I've said, Ray Gillen isn't here this time. I'm guessing that this is about all that Al Romano will be able to bleed out of these sessions and, lord, has it gotten mileage this year. I'll definitely be looking for anything that Romano has to offer in the future, as his playing on these tracks is incredible. **[Sun Red Sun Productions]** *David Lee.*

SWANK The Think For Yourself Movement CD

Mental image: 2 guys walking down the street heading towards each other. "Rudy" is holding an open box of ska while "Ian" is carrying a package of emo. Both of our heroes are being distracted with what they had in their hands, the 2 completely bump into each other, with Ian dropping his glasses, zine and emo into Rudy's checkered, 2-toned parcel. "Hey," exclaims Rudy, "you got emo into my ska!" "Hey," Ian screams in unison, "you got ska into my emo!" They soon look at each other, glance down at the mess that was made, and sample this newfound combination of genres. Immediately, a look of disgust was on both of their faces. "Rudy" and "Ian" took back what was rightfully theirs, and stomped away hoping that they never run into each other again. That pretty much describes Swank and how this sound should never be attempted again. **(Fueled By Ramen)** *Demangis.*

SWINGER The Walk CD

These guys are on Ginger Recs. They sound a lot like the Barenaked Ladies. The Barenaked Ladies come from Canada. I once dated a woman named Ginger. She came from Canada. She left me and married some guy less than a year later. I hate this album. **(Ginger)** *Bob Toole.*

SWINGIN' UTTERS Brazen Head EP

This is the same quality release I'd expect from these guys. It isn't any more poppy than their last album, and it isn't any dirtier either. It's just really poppy street punk, with maybe a little more of a Shane MacGowan thrown in than usual. If you already like this band you probably already own this, and if not, this would be a great starting point seeing as how these 5 songs are all great. **(Fat Wreck Chords)** *Ed Rock.*

THISTLE Sea Legs CD

I'm always a sucker for a good power trio. Thistle is exactly that, a good power trio. Sea Legs really caught me off guard. Comparisons to Sunny Day Real Estate or Texas Is the Reason come to mind. Thistle hails from Kentucky, which is notorious for launching great bands. **[Tiberius]** *Chris Wardell.*

HANK THOMPSON Hank World CD

The best thing about the press kit for this CD is when Hank Thompson, of Six Pack to Go fame, says he knows "nothing about the alternative country movement," that wild child grown oaf-ish and boring. Anyway, this thing consists of 23 songs Thompson, a country star from back when, recorded in his home studio from the '40s to the '60s. The technical quality is fine, Hank's clear voice rings throughout. To tell the truth, the songs start to sound a bit alike after a while, but that could be my waning attention span -- I can't even keep up with *Sanford and Son* anymore. **[Soundies]** *Joyner.*

TILT Viewers Like You CD

At one point or another, every 15-year-old skater punk had a crush on Cinder Block. And who could blame them? Her crisp voice and aggressive presence seemed to shoot Cupid's arrow through everyone's heart and forgot about the rest of the band. Tilt whom? So with their third album, **Viewers Like You**, nothing much has really changed, except for the different label, bassist and an added gruffness to Cinder's voice -- but that's been present years before this record. The pop-punk riffs and catchy hooks are as strong as ever, going along with Cinder's ultra personal lyrics of friendship, love loss and growing up. Dedicated fans will appreciate this. For all those who've never heard of Tilt, check out 'Till it Kills first before snatching up their entire discography. **(Fat Wreck Chords)** *Demangis.*

TIMONIUM Suspended Animation CD

Timonium's latest is an incredibly beautiful and blissful album, building layer-upon-layer for a sound that becomes at once dense and delicate. Comparisons to Low, Mogwai or the Radar Bros. wouldn't be off the mark, however, Timonium steps out of the above's shadow to mark a place for themselves. This CD has only 4 songs [34 minutes and 12 seconds] on it, which, in my opinion, is much too short. The music is 1-part emo and 2-parts slow core / space rock. A haunting record to be sure, **Suspended Animation** will both calm and inspire you with its intricate, well-produced, well-played masterpiece. **[Pehr]** *Norman Zebrowski.*

TRANCE TO THE SUN Urchin Tear Soda CD

This album provides us with an incredible mixture of darkwave / Goth / psychedelic and, even, spoken word. The lyrics, sung exquisitely, are on the somber side, as one would expect, with tales of unrequited love, desperation, sex and picture postcards from a dark, shadow world one finds in one's dreams. It's a ghostly, beautiful listen, almost voyeuristically peering into someone's secret world. There's also a nicely done version of Pink Floyd's "Set the Controls for the Heart of the Sun." However, the one thing that impresses most about this striking album is that the flawless production was done on an 8-track! Incredible! **[Precipice]** *N.Z.*

UNION The Blue Room CD

If you were given the task of selecting a single word to sum up the collaboration between Bruce Kulick (KISS) and John Corabi (Mötley Crüe, The Scream) it would be "Big." Gigantic waves of sound and presence enough to sink the floor are this group's greatest asset and, though that would be enough for most bands to take a run at the golden ring, it's just the beginning for Union. **The Blue Room** is just album number 3 (2nd studio) for this collective, that also includes the rhythm section of Brent Fitz (drums) and Jamie Hunting (bass), yet its performances sound much more experienced than its age would ever let on. Take "Dead" for instance, the hook is irremovable once it's in the ear and the vocal is pure rock-n-roll, undiluted by even the slightest contrivance. Pure, that's another word to describe the band. If you're looking for growth since the first album, there isn't much. This is still your basic straight-ahead whoop-n-howl rock-n-roll, overlaid with melodies too obvious to be ignored by radio a second time. "Everything's Alright" is custom tailored for rock revival radio without the listener being left feeling that was the original intention. The overall sonic texture of **The Blue Room** is a few shades closer to a digitally recorded sound than the warm and fuzzy analog sound of the first album yet they manage to retain every ounce of the former's natural feeling. Kiss fans will be able to draw a bit more from "Dear Friend" which is Bruce Kulick's personal message to his, and the rock world's departed friend, Eric Carr. Kulick also handles the lead vocals on this track save for the chorus, which Corabi belts out. "Hypnotized," relates the story of so many Middle American girls and what happens to them when they chase that dream in New York or LA. Check Tom Petty's "Free Fallin'" for reference. "I Wanna Be" has the most flawless build that I have heard in a song for far too many years to even admit. The orchestration of guitars is subtle but make the song. Union should have happened in a far bigger way than they have, mostly because what they do, they do better than anyone else out there. **The Blue Room** is big in an artistic way. Now all that remains is to make it big in a commercial way. **[Spitfire]** *David Lee.*

UNRUH Setting Fire To Sinking Ships CD

This absolutely rules. Metal to the max at an unholy speed! So fast that Unruh must have health insurance, specifically for their mountain-sized blisters but not too fast, otherwise there'd be a problem telling the songs apart. That and each of the eight tracks clock in at an average of two minutes, so that none of the songs slip by before the album abruptly ends without warning. And to top it off, nothing lyrically satanic or drug-influenced, just straight politics and the frustrations that are associated with getting screwed over by the system. **(Pessimiser)** *Demangis.*

TARA VANFLOWER I this womb like liquid honey CD

Tara Vanflower's [Lycia] perfect Goth girl vox sung o'er the top of ghostly music; in parts reading poetry o'er said music, gives us perfect *nacht muzik*. From swirling recorders to synthesizers and other more traditional instruments, Vanflower shows that she's more than just a singer, as she plays all of the instruments herself [except for the opening track "Opal Star"] and does so with considerable ability. Don't think of this an album with songs, but rather songs woven together to form a whole, seamless piece from Vanflower. As I said, best when playing at night. **[Projekt]** *N.Z.*

VELVET ACID CHRIST Fun with Knives CD

After reading the liner notes, two things struck me: [1.] Bryan Erickson doesn't know crap about hockey; and [2.] he's a bit of a hypocrite. Those human errors notwithstanding, he does create pretty killer Euro-flavored industrial stylings. From the title track, "Fun with Knives," to the tongue-in-check "Slut," you get the big pulsating beat that dominates European industrial. Quite a few bands in the states are now moving towards this sound, and I applaud it, not since Wax Trax was the dominate industrial label in the world has the US been producing acts of this talent level. Metropolis is quickly becoming the industrial answer to Estrus. **(Metropolis)** *P. Hahn.*

LUKE VIBERT & BJ COLE Stop the Panic CD

Imagine an experimental DJ, now try to think of a creative pedal-steel guitarist whose music has the power to take you off to another

ETCH SKETCH

CRIMINAL

CRIMINAL was formed in Santiago, Chile, in late 1991, and has risen to the forefront of the South American extreme metal scene.

Frontman **Anton Reisenegger** is the former leader of seminal death metalers PENTAGRAM, who are cited today as an influence by the likes of DISMEMBER, NAPALM DEATH and AT THE GATES.

"When I started CRIMINAL, I made a conscious effort to avoid the common clichés of the death metal scene," says Reisenegger. "I think CRIMINAL retains the sheer aggression that Pentagram had, but the whole sound and attitude is more modern. The lyrics are also more personal -- still dark and depressive but on a more realistic level."

CRIMINAL's debut album, **Victimized**, was released by BMG in South America and Japan in 1994. "New Disorder," the first video, reached #6 on the viewer's poll of MTV Latino's Headbangers show.

Criminal's second album, **Dead Soul**, produced by Vincent Wojno (KREATOR, MACHINE HEAD), sold over 10,000 copies in Chile alone, since its release in 1997. The video for the first single ["Collide"] was nominated in the "Best Rock Video" category of MTV Latino's Music Video Awards.

"Our success is probably based on people's recognition of all the passion and hard work we put into our music," says Reisenegger. "The fact that we're such an extreme band gaining this kind of attention means to me that people are sick of being force fed by the media and really want to listen to this stuff. Extreme music for extreme times, you know?"

The group has toured most of South America, including Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Peru, Colombia and Mexico. They've been a part of numerous festivals, including the all-South American festival *Rock al Parque* in Bogotá, Colombia, for which they played to 50,000 fans and *Monsters of Rock* in Santiago, Chile, in front of a crowd of 10,000.

"In a way, I feel that the mere fact of being from South America makes us different and we have something to offer that American or European bands don't have," Reisenegger says. "It's the honesty and the passion. Everything has been harder for us, so that makes us even hungrier. We're ready to rise and cause some serious damage!"

The band made its United States debut with a midwestern tour with PROFANE, including appearances at the *Milwaukee Metalfest* and the *Cleveland World Series of Metal* this past summer.

"After years of playing our asses off in South America, we think it's the perfect time to start giving the U.S. the Criminal treatment," said Reisenegger. "People are going to be shocked."

Criminal's most recent album, DEAD SOUL, is its first to be released in America through Metal Blade Records. The band's first album, VICTIMIZED, was released in 1994 by BMG in South America and Japan. Criminal can also be found on Grita! Records' new Latin metal compilation, **METALO**, which includes an unreleased live track, "Hijos De La Miseria."

CRIMINAL:

ANTON REISENEGGER - guitar, vocals
RODRIGO CONTRERAS - lead guitar
JUAN FRANCISCO CUETO - bass
JIMMY PONCE - drums

http://web.interactiva.cl/~grinder/criminal.html

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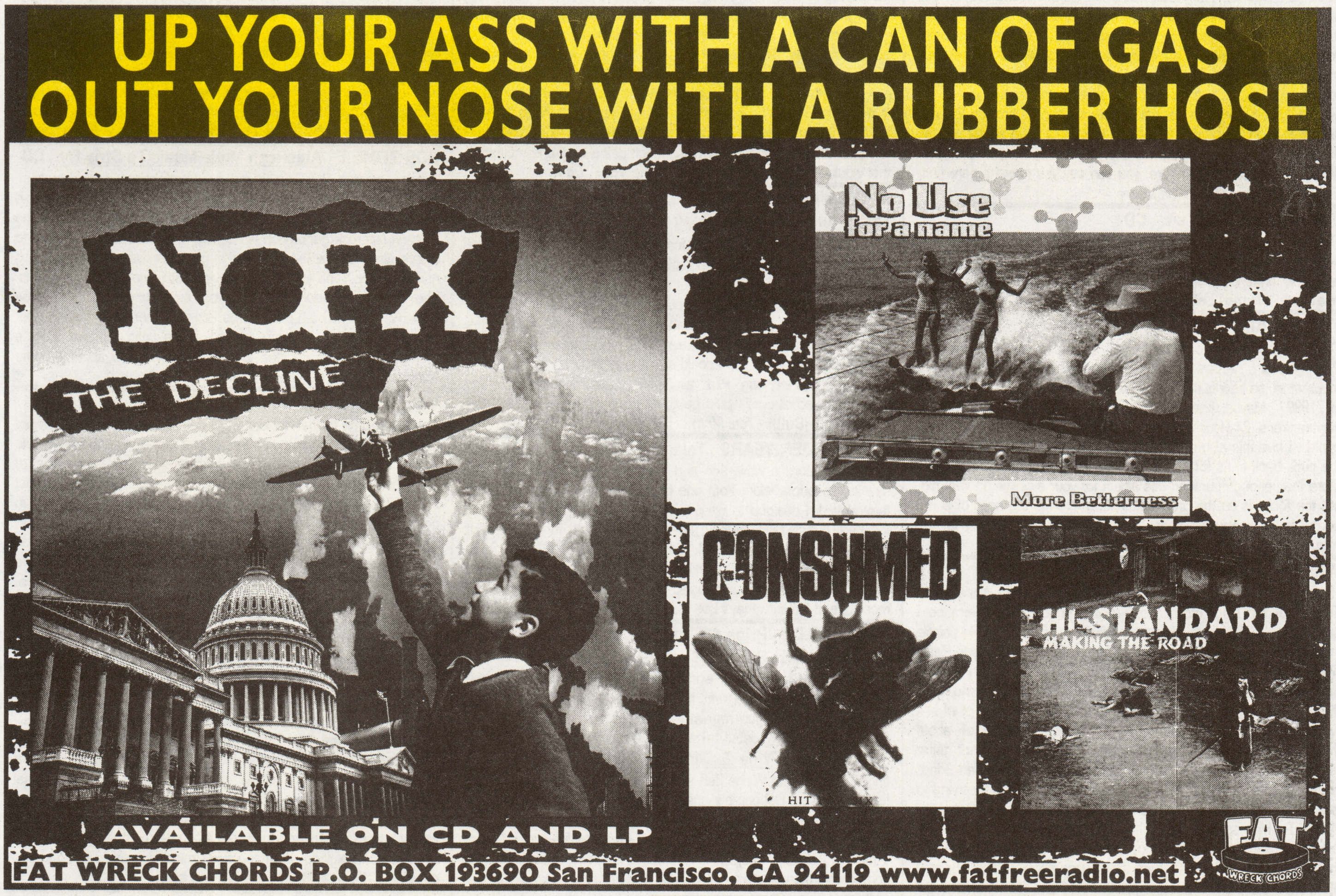

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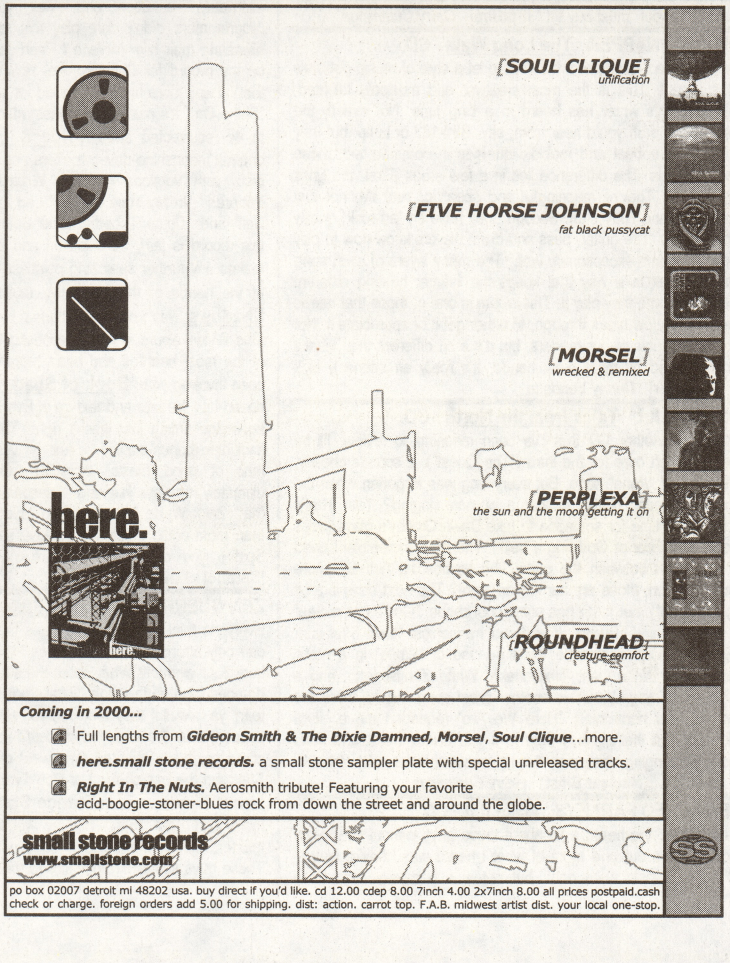

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place (like Hawaii). The result, you'd find, is a masterpiece, as this album is. In any genre today, including Ben Harper, has there been music as new and creative in its approaches to what a song might consist of than this? As Cole slides his hand slowly across the neck of his guitar, hand slightly shivering, you can feel your whole self rock back and forth to the power and energy expressed in his playing. Vibert plays the perfect partner for such a project. Without his creativity in the studio, this album would not have nearly had the effect it did on myself, as well as every person for whom I played it. This is the music of the future; you can say you heard it here first. Enjoy! (**Astralwerks**) *Aaron Moore.*

VULTURE ISLAND s/t CD

There are a lot of issues here. Angry East Lansing based noise-punk. Reminds me of a distorted Crucifucks or early SST stuff. I can hear the brilliance from this very promising young band. [**Self-released**] *Norman Zebrowski.*

THE WEAKERTHANS Fallow CD

Okay, bear with me for a second... This is the bass player from Propaghandi... Propaghandi! Now, I don't like Propaghandi very much at all, so how is it that their bass player put out the best album of 1999? Maybe even the best album in this genre since Jawbreaker's 24-Hour Revenge Therapy [though admittedly less punk]. I love this album from its folky beginning all the way through the punk back to its folky end. I mean, don't get me wrong, there's more than enough punk on this album for your average 15 year old, but the focus is on the great lyrics sung through the nose of some nerdy guy. I know this doesn't sound brilliant but it really is "the most" brilliant. (**Sub-City**) *Ed Rock.*

WESTWORLD s/t CD

I don't know if this is another metal "super-group" (like Whitesnake, Temple of the Dog, etc.), a one-record project, or a permanent band? I think it's just a temporary "alliance." The two main people involved in this project are Tony Harnell (TNT) and Mark Reale (Riot). The bass player is Bruno Ravel (ex-Danger Danger) and the drummer is John O'Reilly. If you're familiar with both Riot and TNT, then you know what to expect: Westworld is the end result of what it would be like to combine those bands. Anyway, time to talk about the music: "Illusions" is cool. It's kind of heavy, with excellent guitar harmonies and singing. "I Belong" is also a bit heavy. "Heart Song" is the obligatory love-song-ballad. [Can you blame them for trying to get airplay?] "Love You Insane" is another heavy ditty. "Bring the Water To Me" sounds like.... I don't know... I think I've heard it before. "Suicide" closes the album. Not bad. There are two or three more songs, but I didn't find them very special. The songs I mentioned are the real finds. If you like TNT and Riot, then this CD should be in your "must buy list." [**Spitfire**] *Gerry Cummings.*

WHIPPERSNAPPER The Long Walk CD

Here's a perfect example of how not to let a style of music get stale and stagnant. This is the most creative, and musically talented, punk band this writer has heard in a long time. Not exactly the poppy sort of stuff you'd hear from, say, Blink182 or Limp, but they do have the upbeat and melodic qualities in common with those types of bands. The difference lies in a few areas. First, the lyrics are fantastic. They're meaningful and speak of real life; not just chicks, love and fluffy stuff. Second, they have an "art-rock" quality to their music. The guitar, bass and drum players know how to play their instruments exceptionally well. The many layers of each song come together in a way that keeps the listener hearing different things every time they play it. This album is one of those that needs to be heard a few times through, to either get it or appreciate it. Not to insult the taste of our readers, but it's a bit different than what's typically played by most punk bands. It's really an intensely sick CD. [**Lobster**] *Danny Vendetta.*

WHITE SKULL Tales from the North CD

This is yet another CD that I've been meaning to review. I'll be honest; I didn't care for the intro ("The Quest"). It sounds cheesy; it's like a bad "Xena" song. But everything was forgotten when the title track began. WOW! Is that a woman singing? Yes! That's amazing! It's time for someone to take Dawn Crosby's place (does Detente and Fear of God ring a bell?). The riff is incredible! I loved the interaction between the guitar and keyboards. Actually, more than interaction, those are harmonies, right? The next song is a bit long ("Asgard"), but it still has some cool chops. "God's of the Sea" has another mind-blowing riff and cool harmonics! White Skull is it! (However I don't appreciate the tired use of "White" in a metal band... does White Lion, Whitesnake, White Zombie etc., ring a bell?). "The Killing Queen" is another great song. Again, there are killer riffs and harmonies. "Here We Are" reminded me a bit of Helloween, but that's fine, I liked it. If you're into metal, and don't mind a girl singing, then pick this up 'cause it kicks a lot of butt! I can barely sit! (**Nuclear Blast**) *Gerry Cummings.*

THE WICKED FARLEYS Make It It CD

This is weird, I've heard a lot about these guys without ever really checking them out and most of what I heard was "they're weird." Well those people were right, but not in a bad way, more in a schizophrenic way. I mean you'd think they were an indie supergroup with the jumble of sounds and influences they can pack into a song. For a band that can take elements of more prolific bands such as Stereolab or Unwound (for a vague example), combine them in a song and even make it an even better song, is just amazing! 97% of this album is great, and regarding the parts that aren't, it doesn't even matter. I'm convinced that this is the only band in the world to be successful at melding pop and that whole "off-kilter rock" that the kids love so much. It's a volatile combination that would kill anybody else. Great. (**Big Top**) *Ed Rock.*

MIKEY WILD & THE MAGIC LANTERNS
I Was Punk B4 U Were Punk CD

I'd never heard of Mikey Wild before getting this from **ETCH**. After listening to it, I'm not surprised. It's pretty slow-paced, lo-fi stuff. I can't call it bad by any stretch, but I also can't call it earth shattering either. Mikey Wild has a lot of humor in his songs like, "Vincent Price Wasn't Very Nice" and "Zombies from the Grave," but it wears pretty thin rather fast. I found it a little difficult to listen to the CD in its entirety. A 7" or an EP I could stand, and probably enjoy, but 60 minutes is just too long. Plus, almost all of the songs (such as the two mentioned above) would be great on a mix tape, just not the same tape. [**Bulb**] *Tom Muth.*

THE WUNDER YEARS Take it Off, Let it Go 7"

I got this record a while ago and completely forgot about it until I saw an anecdotal story from one of them about a Christian venue they played. I decided to listen to it while reading the story. It's not too bad, but certainly nothing I'd buy. It just isn't my interest, but certainly good quality pop punk with a little bit of Small Brown Bike-ish rock-n-roll. The songs, while not terribly original, have a good steady beat and fine musicianship. This is definitely a "for the kids record," and I'm sure they'll love it. [**Tomato Head**] *Tom Muth.*

ZAKK WYLDE Pride & Glory 2-CD
ZAKK WYLDE Book of Shadows 2-CD

Spitfire Records is swiftly working its way into the number one position in my heart due to its impeccably tasteful selection of artist signings and catalogue re-releases. Coinciding with Zakk Wylde's Black Label Society debut release are these two Wylde classics in expanded form. **Pride & Glory** is the country / southern rock tinged one off that Wylde had spoken of doing for nearly his entire tenure as Ozzy Osbourne's guitar picker. Anticipation was high for this record when it was originally released and when it did finally drop radio; especially Z-Rock (r.i.p.) ate it up. The infectious "Losin' Your Mind" topped playlists for weeks and, then, astonishingly, it completely disappeared. This was during the height of the alternative revolution and, well, you know the rest. Radio programmers didn't dare play this record any longer for fear of alienating their new Nirvana / Pearl Jam fan base. There's a banjo on the record for Christ's sake! How can you get depressed over that? If any more proof is needed for your conversion, you might try "Shine On." It's easily the heaviest riffing that Wylde has ever done. In its resurrected state, **Pride & Glory** contains all 14 of its original moonshine-driven rockers and it's augmented by a second disc, with versions of "The Wizard"(Black Sabbath), "Torn & Tattered," "In My Time of Dyin'"(Led Zeppelin), "The Hammer & the Nail" and "Come Together"(The Beatles). The original version of this record is fairly hard to find and long out of print; this version makes any further searching pointless. If **Pride & Glory** suffered at the hands of the alternative music landslide, then **Book of Shadows** was completely buried by it; which is nearly criminal. This Wylde album is mostly acoustically based and contains some of the most heartfelt and heart tugging music that Wylde has yet been involved with. **Book of Shadows** could have birthed a half dozen hits the size and texture of Everlast's one hit wonderment but again the timing just wasn't right. This version, also on two CDs [including bonus tracks], is just as vital for songwriters as it is for fans of good music. Incredible, extraordinary, essential and, ultimately, timeless listening -- despite the fact that it will never be a "hit." Zakk Wylde has managed to do more in three solo albums than most could muster in a career's worth of material. Thanks to Spitfire you can get the entire Wylde collection in one stop. [**Spitfire**] *David Lee.*

ZEN GUERRILLA Trance States in Tongues CD

Everyone thinks they got the blues these days. Every one o' them can only afford to have the "blues." What's it all about these days? Lost your woman? What about the struggle of humanity and puttin' damned food on the table? That's not what Sheppard and Lang are tellin' ya... well if they are, can you take them seriously? Whatever happened to the essence of *soul*? I'd say Zen Guerrilla has just about spiritually inherited the sweat of Otis Redding, the blood of Stax and the ass shaking of Rob Tyner. You wanna talk about one serious live wire epic on **Trance States In Tongues**? This has more spit-n-grit than anything you'll hear from current "blues masters" taking their Clapton-cued puss riffs and *perfecting them*! These guys sound like they kicked their instruments into shape and drove it to the point of "Bleat" on their jacked Marshalls. Their slide guitars sound like a car with no breaks, a harp that's like a train full of nuclear warheads, while the rhythm section steers it all into a crowded shopping mall. This is what it's about folks. Keeping this punk blues full of soul and life. I hear they shred live, they've been making quite an impact out west. (Hey Pam W, you need this disc!) This and the new Speedealer have been my new drinking buddies. This moves like nothing else. Pure electric. (**Sub Pop**) *B. Ramirez.*

ROB ZOMBIE American Made Music To Strip By CD

Is it me, or does Rob Zombie get more pretentious with each album he releases? First, he shafts his band for an egocentric bloated solo album. Now he feels the need to remix it? As if appealing to the Ozzfest-rap rock generation isn't enough, he has to try to appeal to ravers also. I know this is going to be an excuse for metalers too naive to buy "real" electronica, saying they know what techno is. The remixes are done by such acts as: Rammstein, God Lives Underwater and D.J. Lethal [Limp Bizkit]. Other than that, you get plenty of pictures of Rob looking mean, etc. There's also a promotional page dedicated to letting people know about a home video coming out real soon! [**Geffen**] *Chris Wardell.*

VA Beauty In Darkness Vol.3 CD

The 3rd volume in the Nuclear Blast compilation series and it's not even the worst. Too many times sampler comps turn out like movie sequels: as the number of comps mount, the bands they're promoting, get worse. I can't say that in this case. One thing I must say for black and Goth metal, is that it still impresses me. No, I'm not a die-hard fan of the art, but I do know what I like when I hear it; this goes way back to high school when a few friends got me into Deicide, Venom, Death, et al. Some of the tracks on here are instant hits and there are those that need to go away. For instance, Cradle of Filth rules. They couldn't turn me away if they played Backstreet Boys. Well, maybe not that far. Other sick artists include Dimmu Borgir, Moonspell, and Crematory. Now, we all know that you can't have good without bad and I can't write about the good if I don't write about the bad. Tracks to definitely skip are: "3 AM" by Liv Kristie [featuring Nick Holmes]. This crap sounds like Don Henley and Stevie Nicks and it made me want to vomit. Other not-so-fab songs are My Dying Bride's "Under Your Wings" and Sculpture's "Bring Me Down" (which sounds too much like Pantera and STP). There are some good surprises, though. Dismal Euphony's new one is a ball of blood, razors and candy (trust me, just listen to it); and Him's "Your Sweet 666" (while it sounds a bit wussy, is still catchy and intense). As far as comps go, this one's actually worth picking up, if you don't mind skipping 3-or-so tracks out of 14. [**Nuclear Blast**] *Danny Vendetta.*

V/A Best of Moog CD

Let's face it; today's electronic music has become too sophisticated. From catchy beats produced on a couple of pieces of cheap equipment to today's complicated equation of rhythms, breakbeats and samples from multiple pieces of expensive gear, it's as if you need a degree in electronica just to decipher it. The people behind the **Best of Moog** collection, Disinformation, a very interesting website at www.disinfo.com, and Loud Recs understand. **Best of Moog** takes the listener back to the kinder, gentler, and certainly simpler days of electronic music. These tracks are all moog tracks, where the main instrument is the funky moog synthesizer. Although a few of the songs will remind you of those demo tracks on the Casio at Toys'R'Us, just realize, that's the beauty of it, **Best of Moog** gets back to the basics with 19 moog classics. Chances are you've heard these melodies before in one form or another, "The Savers" was the theme to the TV game show "Joker's Wild," "Shank" is a moog take off on Isaac Hayes "Shaft." The final track features old school meets new school as Fatboy Slim extends an old moog standard. If you like electronic music pay some respect to the founding fathers and buy **Best of Moog**. [**Disinformation**] *Mike Pfeiffer.*

V/A Boycott Radical Records CD

This is the best p-rock comp to come down the pike in a long, long time. I'm kicking myself now because I let all of the Radical Rec's stuff that came into ETCH HQ go to other writers grab for review – doh! All the bands are great, plus the tunes were expertly picked [way to go Johnny!], although there were a couple o' clunkers i.e. ICU's Exploited cover ["Dead Cities"]. However, the great songs blow away any of the lesser offerings. Bands include: Blanks 77, Road Rage, Inspecter 7, The Agents, Sturgeon General and Detroit's Social Scare. No street "cred" 'til you snag this, bub. [**Radical**] *Norman Zebrowski.*

V/A The Center of the Universe CD

This comp is made up of five bands from Fort Collins, CO with the exception of one being from Chicago. This project appears to have been headed up by notable '80s punk scenesters Stephen Eggerton (Descendants / ALL) and Bill Stephenson (Black Flag). They produced, engineered and mixed almost everything on this CD. First up is Wretch Like Me. Their music sounds like a mix of grunge and punk; pretty fun, melodic songs. This is no surprise, considering a majority of the members are originally from Seattle, before relocating to Colorado. I liked them best on this CD. They're a band I'd go see live. The next band, Someday I... have been accused of being an "emo" band apparently. These guys sound more punk than emo, plus they aren't quite as slow or lame enough to be emo. New Rob Robbies is the third band, and they make me think of art / college rock. I mean that, in the sense that the Talking Heads were art-punk/college rock in their early days. However, they didn't leave a lasting impression enough on me. Tanger, the next group, plays heavy rock that borders on melodic punk. Tanger has the same feel the Rollins Band had going in the early to mid-'90s. The singer even sounds a tad like Henry in spots. Last up is Bill the Welder, a group made up of the ALL and Descendants road crew. They play a mix of old skate-punk and Bad Religion type punk, and their singer reminds me of Keith Morris. This comp is ok, although I wasn't compelled by it. If you're interested in what Colorado has to offer, musically, this is worth the listen. **(Owned & Operated)** *Stefan Peterson.*

VA **Cinema Beer Belly** Video

Of any medium that can do the most good for a punk band, and yet be the worst thing for them at the same time, it would be the Hopeless video comp. They've showed the diversity and vision of bands and young directors, while delivering even more recognition for the bands and their songs, but for some reason the videos almost always show the guys in the bands. It's not like it's a mystery, but guys in punk bands are usually pretty ugly. That's why glam rock got real big, real fast in the mainstream and punk didn't. As for this comp itself, this is overall the best of the **Cinema Beer** line. Some of the songs, and some of the bands, may not be wonderful (esp. the Melvins and any songs they do), but none of the videos are visually boring. Other songs on other **Cinema Beer** comps may have been better, but that usually meant a lame video. The best bands of this comp are Alkaline Trio's "Goodbye Forever," The Strike's "Shots Heard 'Round the World," Man Or Astroman's "Theme From Eeviac" and Superchunk's "Fishing." One of the really great things about this video is the myriad of bands, with different styles, from various labels. This truly diverse comp even brings you a 3-D video from Mustard Plug, "Everything Girl." **[Hopeless]** *Danny Vendetta.*

V/A **DCide: The 40** 2-CD

DCide: The 40 features 40 bands on 2 CD's that benefits a program for teens in the Washington, DC area. There are all types of bands on the CD, which is one of the problems with it. Most of the first CD is forgettable pop rock that's not bad, but not great either. The second disc is half pop-rap and half hard rock. The hard rock stuff was pretty good, but only Adam West (a band I know and am a fan of) stands out, with a track that's on their latest album. Over all, this comp is for a worthy cause, but unless you're a big pop music fan, I suggest sending a donation instead of buying the album. **(DCide)** *Eric Reanimator.*

V/A **Death to False Metal: Volume II** CD

Death to False Metal... features 19 of your favorite old metal songs redone by some of today's finest punk bands. From the opening strains of Metallica's "Creeping Death," done by The Migraines, to the end track, The New Wave Hookers interpretation of "Shandi," by KISS, you get a smattering of 80's metal. From Mötley Crüe, Faster Pussycat, Anthrax, Def Leopard to smaller bands such as Girlschool, Thor and Hell Hammer. Throw in a G'n'R song, some Maiden and you've got a party. What I liked about the CD was every band wasn't trying to do the big songs, 19 versions of "Dr. Feelgood,"(or something like that) make an album poopy. Most of these are fairly obscure songs, leading me to believe that the bands covering them actually liked some of those groups. My only gripe is the Motörhead cover. Motörhead... False metal? Motörhead IS metal. **(Probe)** *P. Hahn.*

V/A **Duke Nukem: Music to Score By** CD

Compilations have been thrown together for worse reasons other than to pimp a video game, but never have they managed to assemble a soundtrack this good. I'd even go as far as to say this is a great CD despite the attempt at another media tie-in. Furthering their conquest of cyberspace [and all things technologically based], Megadeth has contributed a pair of tracks, including the title track, the appropriately named "Duke Nukem Theme." I also think that "New World Order" is better than anything that the band's done in years and sounds very much like what you might have heard on an early Metallica record. 'Deth-heads will need to get this simply because these tracks appear here and nowhere else. Adding to the exclusivity of this CD are tracks from Type O Negative ["Cinnamon Girl"] and Coal Chamber ["Blisters"] that previously could only be found on import. The other exclusive track, contributed by Corrosion Of Conformity, is "Land of the Free Disease" and it's the best thing in the **Duke Nukem** arsenal. If you're not a collector and just get off on the music itself, there's a whole lot here. Everything from Sevendust's "Bitch," to rap numbers by Xzibit and The Beatnuts, along with Slayer's incredible "Screaming From the Sky," makes this compilation eclectic but it works well as a setting to the game. The "interactive" portion of the CD will probably get 1 viewing, just to see what it's about, but for the real thing you'll have to get the game. Though, now that I think about it, the downloadable one-liners are a pretty cool addition to any sample collection, still, the music is where it is at here. **[Red Interactive]** *David Lee.*

V/A **Essential Blues 3** 2-CD

The latest addition to the Essential Blues series is true to form. The 2-CD set of blues favorites by the masters is beautifully packaged, replete with a fancy box and a fat booklet of pictures and short bios of the artists. It's hard to pick standouts from such a collection, but I will: "Got My Mojo Working," Muddy Waters; "Farther Up the Road," Bobby Bland; and "I Don't Know," Ruth Brown. The only problem with a disc like this is that you end up wanting to buy records of all the musicians on the damn thing. **[Platinum Entertainment]** *Joyner.*

V/A **Flattery: A Tribute to Radio Birdman** 2-CD

Finally! A tribute album with a very appropriate title: **Flattery**. When you boil it down to the meat-n-potatoes, isn't that what ALL tribute records are really about? I'm glad someone had the nerve to come out and put it in print. I'm also glad that Fandango and Nomad Recs joined together to release this fine 2-CD set of Radio Birdman's material. For those not familiar with RB, they're considered by most to be Australia's version of the Stooges. Deniz Tek, the man behind RB, went from Ann Arbor, MI to Australia in the late '70s, and took what he learned at home overseas. Radio Birdman has influenced many of today's bands, that've also been influenced by Michigan bands like the Stooges and the MC5. I didn't find it too surprising to find bands like the Candy Snatchers, The Bellrays and the Hellacopters present. Each band does a cover of a RB song that's equally as good, and in some cases almost better, than the originals. I think that it's a rare thing to find. Who is performing these cool covers? We have an all-star cast of current popular artists present. Aside from the bands just mentioned, there is also The Quadrajets, Glucifer, The Nomads, The Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, The Powder Monkeys and many up-and-coming bands. The beginning of these CDs [that being CD #1, track #1] really KICKS the whole thing off well. Hellride, from Oslo, Norway starts off with an incredible version of "Non-Stop Girls," that's very fast and heavy. This sets the mood for things to come on the following tracks. Especially since the Candy Snatchers are second with a wild version of "Murder City Nights." Other notable versions on this CD are Sheek the Shayk doing "Love Kills," Adam West covering "Burned My Eye" and the Powder Monkeys doing "Smith and Wesson Blues." CD #2, shows a little more of the laid back side of RB. Glucifer starts off with "Monday Morning Gunk." Sator does justice to "Alone in the Endzone." A lot of other classics are also present on these two CDs, like "New Race," "455 SD," "Aloha Steve and Danno," "Descent Into the Maelstrom," "I-94" and plenty more. There's also a "Radio's Appear" medley by Demons, at the end of disc two to end up the tribute. Overall, this is a good 2-CD set to own, especially for completists of this genre. This is also a good introduction to Radio Birdman and the new crop of high-energy rock bands coming from Sweden, Norway, Australia and the US. Also of note is the cool Ed "Big Daddy" Roth-esque cover art provided by Nicke Hellacopter. Call me a geek, but I get a kick out of hearing far away bands sing about Detroit, while having never been here. **(Fandango / Nomad)** *Stefan Peterson.*

V/A **Mail Order Is Fun!!** CD

I didn't think it was possible, but Mike Park has really outdone himself. He [and Asian Man Recs] has succeeded in putting out the biggest piece of shit in the name of ska. I thought it'd be enough that Skankin' Pickle got notoriety, but that wasn't enough. He had to go and form the Bruce Lee Band: "*Jerry, Jerry. Come to my house. My mom will cook you a good meal.*" What the hell is that crap? The reason I know that line (and no other) from one of their songs is that friends and I would listen to the song that line came from, and laugh hysterically at how stupid it was. Well, Mike went on to take the good bands from Dill Recs and put together the worst label in the ska genre (Asian Man) by signing the most mediocre bands he could find. This comp defines that exactly. We have songs by the best of Dill, Blue Meanies, Less Than Jake, MU330 and Slapstick, thrown together with some of the worst shit I've ever heard. There are far too many bad bands to list, but I will list the exceptions. There are notable tracks from bands like Tuesday, the Broadways, Alkaline Trio (who's song "Cringe" can also be found on the Hopeless Recs' video comp Cinema Beer Belly [*see the review above*]) and Johnny Socko, who are worse for having been on this comp. Park has even gone so far as to put his own acoustic solo drivel on this CD. I think it's safe to say that the reason ska died so quickly was overkill. Not only did the corporate guys run wild with the catchy genre, but labels like Asian Man told kids: "*If you can play a couple of chords on a guitar and a few of your friends played horns in middle school marching band, you too can form a ska band!*" Everyone who got into ska was eventually turned off by the barrage of shitty bands that were produced by labels like this. For God's sake, do not buy this CD no matter how cheap it is, unless you're desperate for a beer coaster. **[Asian Man]** *Danny Vendetta.*

V/A **Not So Quiet on the Western Front** CD

A reissue of a classic punk comp from 1982, it's a fine document of the California/Nevada scene of the day. Most of the bands are early 80's style hardcore. Out of 47 bands you should find at least a couple of ones you like, bands I had not heard that caught my ear included; Fang, Code of Honor, the Frigidettes, Pariah and several others. The big names on the CD include; The Dead Kennedy's, 7 Seconds, MDC and Flipper. The liner notes are extensive and appear to have been reprinted in their original form. Forget the mostly lame punk label samplers, and rediscover why the punk comp was such an important part of punk culture. The people, who originally put this comp together, were involved with *MRR* in 1982. The current staff of MRR (none of whom were at *MRR* in '82) disapproves of this reissue. **(Sonic Reducer / Alternative Tentacles)** *Eric Reanimator.*

V/A **Sin Klub Sampler -- Vol. 1** CD

The thing that most will get off on when they listen to this collection of 18 irreverencies from Toledo, OH is the sheer lack of gloss. This is rough, done in a basement with stolen equipment; 70's style rock-n-roll meets post grunge musical non-direction. Everybody seems to play what feels good and, more often than not, it works incredibly well. False Face Society drops in with two sludge-metal grooves that put them right on par with the whole emerging "stoner metal" scene or whatever it will come to be known as. I especially like "Goatfloat" and I think you will too if you're anything like me [and maybe even if you're not]. Reference: Chrome Locust, Electric Wizard or anything on The Music Cartel or Tee Pee rosters. Bunjie Jambo is the kind of band that I usually save all of my witty vitriolic sentiments for, but I'll be damned if their ska flavorings hasn't made me a fan. I know I'll hate myself for saying such nice things but I just can't help it, they're very good. Porn Flakes are right in there with Kid Rock and Limp Bizkit. Five Horse Johnson is the best blues / rock band in the Midwest bar none. They remind me of very early Fleetwood Mac, when Peter Green was inhabited by 1000 dead Delta blues men and spent an entire set wrestling their souls away from the devil. The best stuff here. Chicken Dog works a lot better for me on "Ruben Garcia" than on "Workhorse of the Clouds," but both tunes will have their fans. Great guitar sound for "Garcia." The Thessalonian Dope Gods are incredible and have a Static X kind of feel to them, but with the Gods there isn't a lot of technology keeping the heart pumping. "RIP Liz '69" could be stretched to fill the entire CD and still not get tiring. As if purely for contrast, "Be Nice" has a completely different texture to it and shows that the band can traverse a lot of ground without repeating themselves or those around them and still is identifiable. Section 315 are hardcore punk in the vein of Pro-Pain, so both metalheads and punks will be able to claim them as their own [though I see the punks having the more legitimate claim]. Irwin sounds a bit like a cross-pollination of The Cure and Dream Theatre, but isn't confined to the parameters of either group. Crashdog is American punk rock as tradition would have it, which means they wouldn't care whether I like their music or not but, I do like it and like it a lot. "Proclamation" is 2:14 on the CD but probably only runs about 45 seconds when played live once the energy is up. So, in the end Sin Klub has provided a doorway to nine of the Toledo-area's best bands in almost as many genres and more than enough impetus to go out and actually buy one or more of the featured artists discs and hell, wasn't that the idea anyway? **[Sin Klub]** *David Lee.*

V/A **SNL 25: Saturday Night Live: The Musical Performances, Vols. 1 & 2** 2-CD

Saturday Night Live has always presented musical guests. The show is releasing musical selections from its quarter century musical catalog for its 25-year anniversary. **Volume 1** features more mainstream entries for an older audience. Opening with Paul Simon's "Diamonds on the Soul of Her Shoes," the song comes from his South African phase. The a cappella portion is great, with its deep voices, but the song decays into a typical Simon happy pop. Sting's "If I Ever Lose My Faith" proves that premiering a new song on *SNL* doesn't always equate to a memorable song. "Wonderful Tonight" features beautiful guitar work; too bad Eric Clapton sings. Counting Crows slows the tempo on "Round Here" that accentuates the maudlin emotion. Annie Lennox's voice is still a million times better than the material. I never understood James Taylor's popularity or the Grateful Dead's, while Billy Joel is what he is. Jewel is given full band accompaniment but I found the horns detracted. Lenny Kravitz livens up the CD a bit, but even his performance sounded a bit watered down. Tom Petty tries his hand at blues on "Honey Bee." The fiddle in "What Would You Say" livens up The Dave Matthews Band's hit, while Randy Newman sings his hit, "I Love L.A." The two best songs are David Bowie's "Scary Monsters," with guitars that scream throughout. It sounds like something from his heavy metal Tin Machine period. I'm also surprised at the inclusion of Elvis Costello's "Radio Radio," given the controversy it caused on *SNL*. Costello originally intended to play "Less Than Zero," a song about the sorry state of British television, but stopped the song soon after it started, claiming the song had no relevance in America and switched to "Radio Radio," a song about the sorry state of American radio. (How some things don't change - sigh.) Legend has it Lorne Michaels was so pissed; he ran down to the front of the stage and gave Costello double-fisted fingers off camera. You could see the rage in Costello's eyes when he left the stage after the song's end. "*I want to bite the hand that feeds me. I wanna bite that hand so badly,*" and he did! **Volume 2** is a better album overall; featuring newer, modern rockers. Opening with Nirvana's "Rape Me," I noticed they didn't put the title anywhere on the outside of the CD as not to hinder sales to K-Mart and Wal-Mart. Kurt Cobain sounds even more nasal, but the guitar chords are strong. It's grunge at its best. I love Neil Young's echoed guitar, reverbed and powerful, so heavily affected that, at one point, the strings sound like steel pan drums. The mandolin stands out in REM's "Losing My Religion." Courtney Love sounds so subdued on "Doll Parts" that this could almost be considered an "unplugged version." You almost believe she's wounded. "Sabotage" has a big blustery sound, but the Beastie Boys vocals are too submerged. I'm not much for rap or R&B, so normally I'd usually skip the next set of tracks, but I like some of Dr. Dre's lyrics. "*A fool an his dough are soon split. So when you come across a fool gets all you can get;*" words of advice from a street-wise man. Oasis' song sounds similar to Neil Young's, especially in guitar effects. I wouldn't have realized this if they hadn't been on the same CD. Green Day sounds rather restrained and the pick of The Pretenders, "I'll Stand By You," told me that who ever put this collection together, picked the slower, "safer" songs for mass consumption. Alanis Morissette has a trimmed down band for a simpler sound. Unfortunately, the harmonica sounds weak. The big surprise was Mary J. Blige's "Reminisce." She has an amazing voice that is quite ethereal. Finally, it closes with a slow love song by Janet Jackson. **[Mammoth]** *Allen Salyer.*

V/A Start Your Engines CD

This 28-song comp features music for fans of The Reverend Horton Heat. From songs that are more in the European realm of psychobilly, such as The Phantom Rockers' "Rumble Rock," to the Teens Idols' straight ahead SoCal skate punk. There's a little bit of everything here. From cowpunk and metal, to punk and psychobilly it's all displayed here. A much better comp than I normally get, most of these bands seem to agree with me that psycho is closer to metal than most people think. My theme song, or at least a good excuse, is "Blame it on the Whiskey" by The American Fuse. (**Side One / Dummy**) *P. Hahn.*

V/A Tangled Up In Blues: Songs of Bob Dylan CD

Never in my life did I ever think I'd hear the phrase "*So why don't you just chill,*" in a Bob Dylan song. But, there it is in the sex-soaked preamble of Isaac Hayes' brilliant foreplay in "Lay Lady Lay." I've always looked at Bob Dylan covers with a jaundiced eye (remember Sophie B. Hawkin's insult of "I Want You"?), but this collection of blues interpretations of Dylan's songs should not surprise; Dylan has been saying, for years, that his biggest influences were the old blues singers. It's a natural tribute for this particular genre of music to recognize this master of so many musical trades. Like a Dylan concert, **Tangled Up In Blues** explores many forms of blues, from the apocalyptic up-tempo of Larry McCray's "All Along the Watchtower" and R.L. Burnside's "Everything is Broken," to the soulful "Gotta Serve Somebody" by Mavis Staples and "I'll be Your Baby Tonight" by legendary John Hammond. Hayes offers up a completely new and fresh reading of "Lay Lady Lay," turning it into a late-night soul D.J.'s dream. Leon Russell has fun with "Watching the River Flow," treating this seldom acknowledged classic with the same respect that The Band used to treat Dylan's songs. Which brings me to the finest offering on the record: the reunited Band's (sans Mr. Robertson) "One Too Many Mornings," the haunting ballad of breaking up from The Times They Are A-Changing. Rick Danko's vocals are aged and fragile, while the guitar work toward the end is heartbreaking. **[no label]** *Bob Toole.*

V/A Ultra Swank CD

22 bands! 28 tracks!! There's at least one entry from every band on Cacophone's label here. There are lots of different flavors, from rockabilly to surf to punk to '60s garage. There's even a more soulful cut provided by Super 400 here. It's an excellent example of what's going on today in the more straight-ahead rock-n-roll scene. Hell, for a five measly bucks (!), how can you go wrong? There's something to please just about any fan of all things rock. This is indie rock the way the kids in '54 did it! **[Cacophone]** *B. Norton.*

V/A Unsealed: A Tribute to the Go-Go's CD

The Go-Go's seemed like a band ripe for interpretation, especially by punk bands (let's face it, chord progression-wise, they're not that far off from the Sex Pistols). The problem, alas, is that the girls didn't write enough good pop songs. And that's where **Unsealed...** suffers. There are some nice efforts, but too many of the originals weren't very good in the first place, so the covers naturally fail to hit their mark and are less than memorable. Truly's amphetamine-induced "Our Lips Are Sealed" is the standout track; it's a lazy defense of slacker independence and makes a great addition to any party mix tape. Chainsaw Kitten's "We Got the Beat" turns the original on its head for its lack of beat, while the tremendous "Vacation" loses its playfulness in The Frogg's tiresome electronica shuffle. **[4 Alarm]** *Bob Toole.*

V/A Welcome to 1984 CD

Like Not So Quiet on the Western Front, this CD is a reissue of the international punk comp from 1984. The music is "old school" hardcore punk, which I like much more than what passes for hard core these days. The bands (23 from 17 countries) that I've heard before include: Terveet Kadet, Crucifucks, Rattus and Raw Power. All in all, a very nice reissue, check it out. (**Sonic Reducer**) *E. R.*

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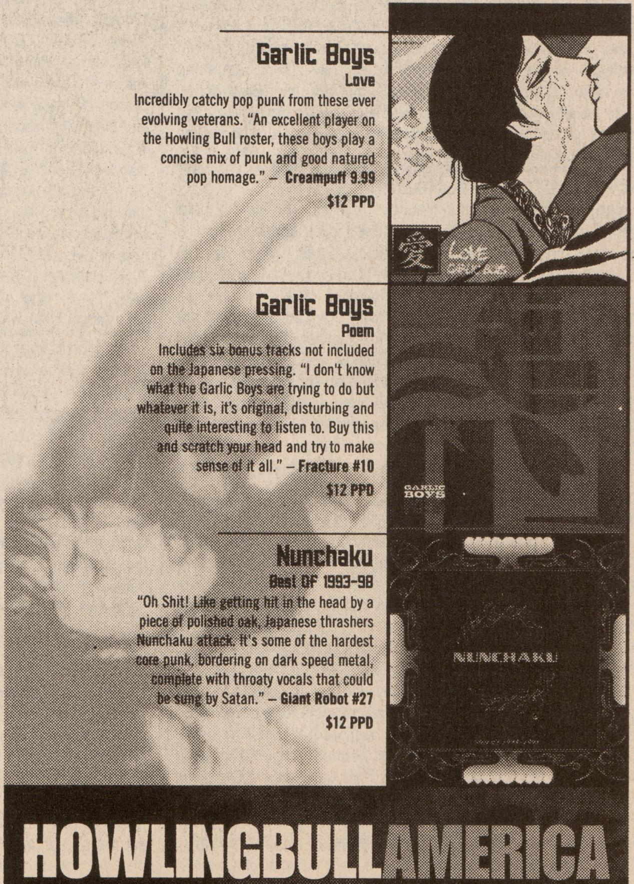

Garlic Boys
Love
Incredibly catchy pop punk from these ever evolving veterans. "An excellent player on the Howling Bull roster, these boys play a concise mix of punk and good natured pop homage." – **Creampuff 9.99**
$12 PPD

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READ

BY CHAD OVERDOSE

AGE OF SINNOCENCE

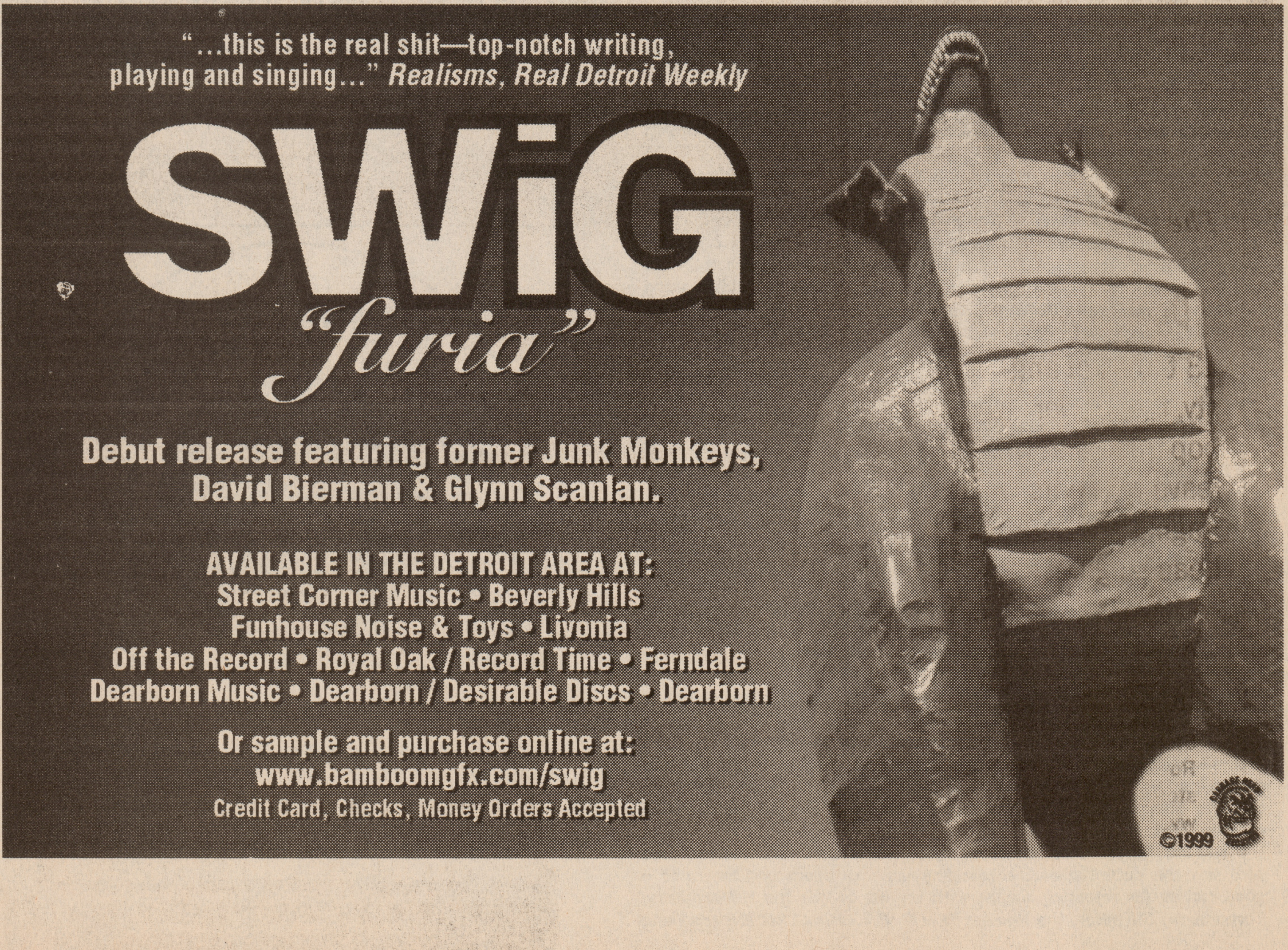
This B&W comic has a nice layout and EXTREMELY well drawn illustrations. I can't say the same for most of the story lines (don't get me wrong, they aren't horrible) but the artwork really makes up for it. I say support these starving artists and spend a buck on this one.
[$1.00 / 26pp. / standard size / 2986 Chapshire SE / Grand Rapids, MI. 49546]

BETTER THAN HEAVEN: THE OFFICIAL LOVESCOPES FANZINE

This seems to be some sort of.... AH, HECK, I don't know? Evidently there's some crazy local pop band called **THE LOVESCOPES** (I've never heard of them & the more I look at this thing the more I think it's all a big joke) & this is their 14-page advertisement basically. There's a small bio on each member, short history, an interview & some ads. I don't completely understand this whole thing, but if the local band "**THE LOVESCOPES**" really exists and you've heard of them and you dig 'em then this will probably be fun for you. Otherwise it's a waste of two quarters.
[No address given / standard size / Xerox / 14 pp. / ¢.50]

HOOFSIP

Whenever I get a package from ETCH of stuff to review, this is ALWAYS the first 'zine that I pick up and read. I've said it before and I'll say it again.... and again. There isn't enough humor in 'zines today. This thing makes me laugh out loud every time I read it. This issue has an interview with some people from a local public access comedy / skit show called **Something To Laugh At**, An article on how **Charles Manson** might interpret the **BEATLES** songs from their new Anthology, A look at WWJD (I liked this even though I am a strong believer in Christ, it was very funny), another look at some passages from some crazy book called "Between Parent & Teenager" that they got their "hoofs" on, a very original "interview" with **GETAWAY CRUISERS** where they are asked questions from the game Trivial Pursuit, zine reviews and their cop-out version of music reviews, & a bit more.
[#45 / $1.50 / Xerox / 25pgs / PO Box 7636 / Bloomfield Hills, MI. 48302-7636]



"...this is the real shit—top-notch writing, playing and singing..." *Realisms, Real Detroit Weekly*

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T. RIP

SCANDI-RAMA LAMA FA FA FA

Eric & Stefan Reanimator

Leave it up to the Scandinavians to remind us where we've been, in terms of rock and roll, and quite possibly point out the direction of underground rock and roll at the same time. In these times of prepackaged mass marketed kiddy-pop, some people still remember rock and roll radio, and they happen to be from Sweden, Norway, Finland, and Denmark. While visiting Scandinavia last September we were able to investigate a little bit. By now, a lot of underground rock and rollers have heard of such big acts as the **HELLACOPTERS**, **TURBONEGRO** and **GLUECIFER**. What we intend to do here is expose some of the up and coming bands, that are in the same league as the bands mentioned above. Some of them have yet to reach the same status in the USA and we're sure that we will be hearing more from some of them in the days to come. Also, we'll highlight some labels and miscellaneous things at the same time.

BANDS:

We won't attempt to cover EVERY band in Scandinavia, so we've picked a few that we're familiar with. While there isn't only one style of rock played by these bands, they share a common influence of Detroit rock, garage rock and punk. Oslo, Norway spawned the acts Gluecifer and Turbonegro, and the scene shows promise of more great bands. One of the bands leading the pack is **HELLRIDE**, who derive their sound from the likes of Motörhead the Stooges and Radio Birdman. They've released several 7"s in Europe, and there's one on the way in the USA. The gals of Oslo have proven that they can rock out just as hard as the guys. **MENSEN**, a 3/4 female band, sound like the Dead Boys and the Runaways playing garage rock songs. Mensen so far have a couple 7"s released in Europe. Also taking their cues from 60's garage rock are the **BARBARELLAS**; five young ladies whose songs are more like ? and The Mysterions than the Sonics. Sweden, Norway's neighbor to the east, is home to bands like the Hellacopters and the **NOMADS**. Sweden continues to redeem itself for the ABBA incident, with it's up and coming bands. **MISDEMEANOR** is an all girl rock band, similar to Drain STH and Black Sabbath. We've only been able to find two 7"s from them. Finally, there's the **TEENAGE GRAVES**, who play sex-horror-metal infused with punk, and the **COFFIN SHAKERS** -- imagine Johnny Cash singing about Vampires.

Hellride

LABELS:

With any up-n-coming music scene, bands need to be fostered by labels as a means for their music to get heard. Up came the Scandinavian labels [and later American labels like Man's Ruin and Sub Pop], to help out domestically.

Psychout Records (Box 255, 114 79 Stockholm, Sweden), was started by Hellacopters' lead man, Nicke. We haven't had the proper resources to give a full assessment of the label and its history, however we've learned quite a bit from Hellacopters' bassist Kenny. Not only has Psychout been a home for the Hellacopters themselves, but they've also released other 7"s by other Swedish punk and rock bands, including bands like Misdemeanor and **THE ROBOTS**.

Bad Afro Records (Poste Restante, Frederiksberg Alle 6, 1820 Frederiksberg C, Denmark) is a Danish label [started in 1996] that was determined to release and showcase punk, garage, noise and surf from the Scandinavian countries. Bad Afro decided to show off Scandinavian rock on vinyl, by starting the Bad Afro Hustler Singles Club, kind of like the Sub Pop Singles club. However, they do have CDs out as well. Bad Afro saw the potential of the Scandinavian rock bands and have had a good run so far releasing singles with big bands like the Hellacopters, Turbonegro, Gluecifer, the Nomads, **THE FLAMING SIDEBURNS** and **THE BACKYARD BABIES**, plus others. Bad Afro plans to continue support of the Scandinavian rock scene with a promising release schedule for 2000.

White Jazz (Box 2140, 103 14 Stockholm, Sweden) is currently, most likely, the biggest of these Scandinavian labels. White Jazz is most notable for releasing records by the Hellacopters and Gluecifer. White Jazz has release two volumes of the **SWEDISH SINS** comp. CD, which serve as a good overview of the Scandinavian rock scene. They are continuing to release quality rock with up coming bands such as Hellride. Getting records from the Scandinavian bands by way of expensive imports isn't the only way to get the rock and roll. American labels like Man's Ruin, Estrus, Sub Pop, Sympathy For the Record Industry, Empty, and many more have been active in releasing new records by some of the more notable bands, as well as re-releasing some of the bands previous albums.

Other labels that are promoting the punk / garage / rock-n-roll bands are **Freak Scene** (ST: Eriksgatan 64, 113 20 Stockholm, Sweden), **Frank Records** (PO Box 103, 771 23 Ludvika, Sweden) and **Low Impact Records** (Box 475, 701 49 Örebro, Sweden)

CLUBS:

Last Train
Elm Street
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MISCELLANEOUS:

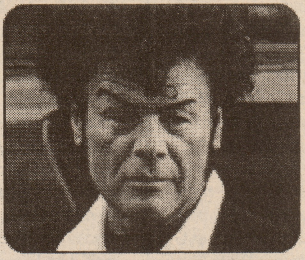
Sound Pollution Comps (Swedish Sins/Pushing Scandinavian Rock...)
Food at Elm Street
Moshable

Special thanks to **Pete Evil** of Hellride, **Lars Kragh** of Bad Afro / Moshable, **Kenny Hellacopter** and **Jake Starr** [of **Fandango Records**] for providing us with lots of information, contacts, records, and showing us around while in Scandinavia.

Bad Afro Records

NEWS

GLITTER WANTS LIFE BACK AFTER JAIL


GARY GLITTER

Disgraced British glam rocker **Gary Glitter** wept with remorse saying he wanted to get his life back on track after serving half of a 4-month jail term for possessing hardcore child pornography. "I deeply regret doing what I was sent to prison for," Glitter, 55, told reporters hours after being smuggled out of jail over concerns for his safety. "I've served my time and I want to put it all behind me and live my life." The flamboyant rocker had to leave behind his trademark towering wig and platform shoes when he was jailed in November, and was escorted from Bristol's Horfield Prison under a veil of secrecy. Special arrangements had to be made after the fallen star received at least one death-threat and several threatening letters in jail, prison officials say. He'd been housed in the healthcare center of the prison because of fears that other convicts might attack him. Glitter was convicted under his real name, Paul Gadd, of possessing thousands of sexually explicit images of children he had downloaded from the Internet. He was cleared of 8 charges of indecent assault and sodomy dating from 1980. Victim support groups were outraged at his early release. "Because of the nature of his convictions, we feel it sends out entirely the wrong message to other pedophiles," Family Advocacy International says in a statement. "Paul Gadd does not deserve his freedom and there is no evidence to suggest that he has received any rehabilitation to help him control his behavior." All prisoners given sentences of fewer than four years only serve half their term. Glitter, whose hits include "I'm the Leader of the Gang, I Am" and "Rock & Roll Part 2," will remain under supervision for at least the next month. Britain's top-selling *Sun* tabloid said that Glitter had sold his home in Southwest England and was planning a move to Cuba. His arrest in 1997 came when he returned from a holiday to the Caribbean island. In a letter to the Cuban ambassador, Family Advocacy urged the country to refuse any request by Glitter to become a naturalized citizen, saying it "would most certainly put the innocent children of Cuba at risk."

Former members of 2 Detroit alt-rock heavyweights, **Hoarse** (RCA) and **Sponge** (Beyond) have joined forces to form **Crud**. The band features Vin E. Dombroski (former lead singer of Sponge) on vocals; Joey Mazzola (Sponge guitarist), on guitar; Jimmy Paluzzi (who beat the drums in both Hoarse and Sponge) and Robbie Graham (Hoarse) on bass. Sponge quietly called it quits in December after disappointing sales of their last release ***New Pop Sunday*** on Beyond Music. Hoarse dissolved 2 years ago due to personal conflicts in the midst of the release of their highly anticipated debut CD on RCA records. Crud made its Detroit debut on Friday, Feb. 11 at **Lili's 21** in Hamtramck. +++ Justin Dillavou (former lead singer / guitarist of the Montana-based **The Skoidats**) has joined US Skinhead Ska band **Inspecter 7**, who'll be playing with Radical Recs' label mates **Submachine** and **The Booked** on select tour dates in March. The band will then head west with Submachine. Dillavou will be doing 2nd vocals and rhythm guitar with Inspecter 7, "*essentially filling the gap left by (recently-departed 2nd vocalist) Guiseppe*" according to Inspecter 7 vocalist, T. Dogg. +++ **Megadeth** guitarist, Marty Friedman, who's been with the band for over 10 years, has left the group to pursue other musical interests. Frontman, Dave Mustaine commented, "Marty is an incredible player and has been a keystone in Megadeth. We're sorry to see him go but we wish him all the best." Guitar wiz, Al Pitrelli (Alice Cooper, [*see Savatage bit further down, ed.*]) filled in as the band wound up the first leg of their domestic *Risk Tour*, which ran through January 21. Megadeth will continue to tour domestically and internationally with stops in Japan and South America, returning to the US in the summer. +++ **Hot Water Music** was added to the *Warp Tour 2000* and will be sharing both the main stage and second stage with the likes of: Public Enemy, NOFX, MxPx and more. They're also on yet another US tour starting this month. New Jersey's **Saves The Day** will accompany HWM for the first half of the tour, before hooking up with H^{2}O. STD will also be shooting a video with acclaimed video director Darren Doan in February. **Elliot** will support the later part of the HWM tour. +++ Gern Blandsten Recs was picked up by Mordam Distribution and have new releases for **Radio 4** and **World Inferno Friendship Society** planned for early spring. +++ On January 11 Crank! Recs released **Jonah's** ***onelinedrawing***. The solo artist, who received critical acclaim with the band Far in the 90's, plans to donate a portion of the record sale proceeds to Steven Spielberg's renowned and well-respected Survivors of the Shoah Foundation, an organization who's mission is to document firsthand accounts of the Holocaust from remaining survivors, eyewitnesses, liberators and rescuers. The Shoah Foundation launched it's mission to create a multimedia archive that now contains more than 50,000 unedited testimonies and more than 100,000 hours of footage of firsthand accounts from Holocaust survivors. +++ BYO signed a deal with the **Cadillac Tramps** for a live "Best of" record, recorded in the summer of '99 at the Galaxy in Fullerton, CA, to be released in February. Look for them out on the road in February & March. +++ **7 Seconds** and **Anti-Flag** will be recording their new songs for the ***BYO Split Series #3***, which will also be released in February. +++ Sunderland, England's **Leatherface** are currently recording their new full length at Trinity Heights to be released by BYO in March. They're planning a full US tour for mid-to-late spring. For now, you can check them out on the ***BYO Split Series #1***, with them and Hot Water Music and on the re-release of their first album, ***Cherry Knowel***. +++ This year will be a busy one for Projekt Recs. In the first 4 months, they'll have released more music [see the "Band" section] than in all of '99. +++ **Joan of Arc** is working on their 4th full-length with Casey Rice. +++ Nuclear Blast announced the signing of metal forefathers, **Savatage**. Composed of members: Zak Stevens (vocals), Chris Caffery (guitar), Al Petrelli (guitar), Jon Oliva (keyboard / vocals), Jeff Plate (drums) and Johnny Lee Middleton (bass); Savatage is perhaps the most prestigious metal act to join the Nuclear Blast roster. Watch for a release this spring! +++ Norwegian Grammy Award Winners, **The Kovenant**, scheduled to appear on the prestigious "Tonight With Thomas Giertsam" show (Norway's answer to the David Letterman show), was forbidden to make their slated appearance by the show's producers. Originally scheduled for taping on November 15 in Oslo to be shown on Norwegian television, this would've been the first time a metal act had ever been asked to perform on the national talk show in Norway. The band received a phone call from the producers of the show explaining that The Kovenant's appearance would be cancelled, stating the band is "too violent" and generally "unfit" for the show's viewers. According to guitarist, Psy Coma, "This is a perfect example of the Norwegian media being afraid of what we represent. This just proves that we need to continue what we are doing." +++ The debut from **Control Denied** [featuring Death's Chuck Schuldiner], ***The Fragile Art of Existence***, has been delayed due to problems with the album's artwork, but hit stores in time for the holidays. +++ **Raise Hell** recently entered the Studio Fredman in Gothenborg to record their 2nd album. The working title, ***Not Dead Yet***, is to be released this spring. +++ **Night In Gales** recently finished recording on their third album, ***Nailwork***. The album was produced by Harris Johns (Sodom, Kreator, Voivod) and includes a cover song that hasn't been disclosed at the time this issue went to press. However, you can count on hearing a nifty version of either "Black Velvet" from Alannah Myles or "Indians" from Anthrax. +++ British band, **Benediction**, are penning songs for their up-coming LP tentatively slated for a late spring release. It will be their first with new vocalist Dave Hunt, who appeared with the band on the second leg of the *Grind Bastard Tour*. The music will remain just as brutal, so expect nothing less than another death metal release. +++ **Narnia**, melodic rockers from Sweden, entered the studio in December to record the next full-length. The band promises something harder than ***Long Live The King***. +++ **Sinner** played in Tokyo, Japan recently with Primal Fear. This was the first time that Mat Sinner played with both of his bands at the same venue on the same night. The band also began working on their new album, ***The End Of Sanctuary*** in Winterbach, Germany. It will be produced by Sinner himself and it's expected to be yet another "masterpiece" in melodic rock / Metal. The current lineup is made up of: Sinner (vocals, bass), Alex Beyroth (guitar), Frank Rössler (keyboard) and new member Henny Wolter (guitar -- he replaces Tom Naumann] and drums will be played by world class drummer Uli Kusch. The band entered the German album charts at #92 and the Norwegian charts on #40. The band is planning a huge European tour for this spring. +++ Germany's **Darkseed** have completed the recording of their newest release, ***Diving Into Darkness***. The LP will be far more atmospheric and experimental. For more info on the band, check out the band's new, official website: www.darkseed.com. +++ **Steel Prophet** has finished recording their next album, ***Messiah***, at the Silver-Cloud-Studios in Los Angeles. The release is set for next spring. The band is currently in search of a new drummer. +++ **Therion** is done mixing their new album, ***Deggial***, at the Woodhouse Studios, to be released March 7. +++ **LOCK UP**, featuring Peter Tagtgren, Nick Barker, plus Shane Embury and Jesse Pintado. Recorded at Tagtgren's Abyss Studios, the LP entitled, ***Pleasure Paves Sewers***, is scheduled for a February 15 release. +++ Nuclear Blast has re-signed **Incubus**. However the band will appear under the new name "Incubus Rage" (due to the "more mainstream" rap-metal band of the same name). +++ V2 Recs is working on getting the **High Llamas** over to the US in February. +++ **Moby** did the "radio show circuit" along with Oasis, Foo Fighters, Blank 182, etc. in December. He finished '99 by doing a show at the Crobar in Miami on Dec. 31. He'll continue to tour throughout 2000. "Natural Blues" is the next single and video [remixes by Beastie Boys, Paul Oakenfold and Deep Dish]. Look for the ***Sessions at W. 54th St.*** performance in Jan. / Feb. +++ There'll be a **Michael Hutchence** [**INXS**] posthumous album, produced by Andy Gill (Gang of Four) and Danny Saber (Black Grape). Check out the last track, "Slide Away", featuring additional vocals by Bono. The release is set for Feb. 22. +++ The **Jungle Brothers'** latest, ***VIP***, [produced by The Propellerheads' Alex Gifford], is a combination of hip-hop and electronic music. It was released on Feb. 8. +++ The L.A. band **Sumack** recently signed with V2, and wrapped up a tour with Everlast. Their music has been called "edgy smart pop." Their new album, ***Now Hear This***, will be out March 21. +++ French band **Rinocerose** is another new signing for V2. Their new single, "Le Mobilier" 12" / CD was released in Dec. The full length, ***Installation Sonore*** will be released in the US in April. +++ **Cosmo Vitelli** is an artist from the French label, Solid, who brought us **Alex Gopher**. You may remember Vitelli from his track on the ***Source Material*** comp. (Astralwerks). His album, ***Video***, is a blend of electro-funk, loungy trip hop and abstract electronica. It'll be out early this spring. +++ **Granddaddy** recently finished their next album, ***The Sophtware Slump***. It's scheduled to be released in April. +++ **Stereophonics** will be back in the US for more touring in 2000 +++ Jade Tree announced a new addition to its roster, the Boston, MA band **The Explosion**. Formed in the fall of 1998 by Matt Hock and Dave Walsh, they quickly recruited Damian Genaurdi (In My Eyes) and Dan Colby. Sam Cave (ex-The Trouble) joined a few months later to complete the line-up. The band plays "spunky straightforward '77-style jams" combining elements of street punk and hardcore done with a more modern flare. If you enjoy The Clash, Buzzcocks, Stiff Little Fingers, Naked Raygun and The Who, then this is right up your alley. Their self-titled debut CD single will hit stores on March 28. This 6-song CD-S is packed with catchy sing-a-longs and youth anthems. To promote this release, the band will be touring over the next few months, followed by a full-length LP and a US tour next summer. +++ Devil in the Woods recording artist, straight out of California, comes the co-ed **Earlimart** with their debut ***Filthy Doorways***. Earlimart plays alternately dusty and sleepy pop to music more that's more angular and aggressive. It's scheduled for a late Feb. release and a national tour. +++ Southern Rec's **The Lapse** cancelled their US tour and go on hiatus for roughly 2 months in order to gear up for their new album and next year's rigorous tour plan, currently scheduled for a March release. In the meantime Chris will be in India, "waiting out Y2K and carving incense holders," he says. Meanwhile, The Lapse will release a 4-song EP available from Insound (www.insound.com). There are 2 tracks from The Lapse, one from **Octalapse** (Lapse and **Dalek**) and a solo track from Chris. +++ Coming soon from Touch & Go: **Calexico**, **Cash Money**, **Man...Or Astro-Man**, **Shipping News**, **Silkworm**, **Rachel's-Matmos** and **Shannon Wright**. +++ Coming this spring from Kill Rock Stars: April '00: **Thrones** ***Sperm Whale*** 12" / CD (the CD also includes their *White Rabbit* EP), and a **Sleater-Kinney** LP/CD, May '00: **Bangs** LP / CD [The follow up to *Tiger Beat*.], **Bonfire Madigan** CD, and **Jean Smith** CD [Mecca Normal]. +++ Coming this spring from Lookout! Recs: ***Lookout's 1999 Budget Sampler*** LP / CD. **The Go Nuts** new full length LP / CD. +++ Upcoming spring / summer releases from Nuclear Blast / Caroline: **Gorgoroth** *Incipit Sathanas*, **Stratovarius** *Infinite* and **Soulreaper** ***Written in Blood***. +++ Look for these Razor & Tie releases in 2000 from: **Dar Williams** and **Cledus T. Judd (No Relation)** ***I Stoled This Video***. +++ Both **Kid Dynamite** and **Turing Machine** have new albums coming out on Jade Tree this

February. Turing Machine is the new band from members of early 90's DC staples, **Pitchblende** -- don't expect a rehash. Kid Dynamite's 2nd album, ***Shorter, Faster, Louder***, establishes them as innovators in a genre most of you thought had played itself out long ago: hardcore. Its release is set for Feb.15, with nonstop touring for the next 9 months. +++ Metropolis announced the signing of Canada's, **Rhea's Obsession**. Their new record is expected to be out on March 7. +++ Metropolis has licensed the latest CD from legendary synth-pop pioneers, **Alphaville**, CD for North America. +++ **:wumpscut**'s next release, **Bloodchild**, which should be out in late March or early April. It'll be a 2-CD set with a multimedia part showing lots of images, sounds and text. There are 2 brand-new songs ("Hang Him Higher" and "Praise Your Fears"), and tons of rare tracks will be featured on this release. +++ **Haujobb** and **Decoded Feedback** will embark on a US / Canadian jaunt starting in Feb. (confirmed dates will be posted to www.metropolis-records.com). This is the band's first tour and will feature material from *all* of their releases. Look for Haujobb's side project, **Cleen**; they have a new single due out on Feb. 22. The single, called "The Voice", features remixes by **Wumpscut** and **Cutratebox**. +++ The Metropolis compilation, ***Electropolis, Part 2***, has been delayed until at least the end of January. It features, among others: **Apoptygma Berzerk**, **Front Line Assembly**, **Wumpscut**, **Flucht**, **Informatik**, **Diary of Dreams**, **Kevorkian Death Cycle**, **Front 242**, **Project Pitchfork**, **Funker, Voght**, **Mentallo & the Fixer**, **Numb**, **Crocodile Shop** and **Ikon**. +++ **Apoptygma Berzerk** is currently in production right now on a new record; the official release date set at Feb. 22. Look for Stephen and the boys to tour the States in 2000 in support of this CD. +++ **Diary of Dreams** finished their new studio record called, ***One of Eighteen***, it will come out on March 7. +++ Radical Recs has signed Pittsburgh's **Submachine**; a punk / hardcore band that ranks them among the East Coast's heaviest outfits. Their debut on Radical CD, ***Fresh Out of Give-A-F***'s***, is "beer-fueled, fast and furious punk, chock full of abrasive, crunchy metallic riffs and rapid-fire guitar solos, topped by the gravelly voice of Alex Lewinger." The Steel City's biggest drawing punk band, they've toured relentlessly and sold plenty of vinyl, LPs and 7"s over the course of their 10 year history, playing with the likes of: The Dwarves, Blanks 77, Motörhead, NOFX, Queers, Man... Or Astroman and Fear amongst others. *Fresh Out...* is the debut full-length CD/LP from Submachine, aside from 98's ***Sawed-Off Shotglass: Anthology of Vinyl*** (available through Radical distro), a 66-minute, definitive Submachine collection of all compilation / appearances and 7" releases under one roof. Radical will release *Fresh Out...* on February 22nd, along with the debut release from Corpus Christie, TX street punk / Oi! Band **The Booked**, entitled ***Feel The Pride***. Both bands will tour together in February to coincide with their respective releases. Speaking of The Booked, the Texas boys have seen snow for the first time, getting caught in a blizzard and spinning out on the road with **Blanks 77**. +++ **The Cuffs** played their last show, Sunday Dec.19, at The Killtime in Philly. It was a big Radical bill with Blanks 77, **LES Stitches**, **Total Chaos** and The Booked. +++ **Inspecter 7** celebrated their 7-year anniversary at the Court Tavern, in New Brunswick, NJ on Friday, December 17. +++ **Sturgeon General** are in the studio now recording their follow-up to ***Stout***. Look for a release this spring. +++ Comprised of original founding members, Harley Flanagan and Parris Mayhew, "New York's Hardest Band," **The Cro-Mags** are back with a vengeance. The band's new CD, ***Revenge*** will be released in early 2000 on Cro-Mags Recordings. *Revenge* expands on the foundation built by the band's 2 previous releases - the quintessential "crossover" album ***Best Wishes*** and the definitive hardcore album ***The Age of Quarrel***. Look for the Cro-Mags' crushing live show on the *Conquer the World Tour* in early 2000. In addition to releasing *Revenge* the band will be releasing for the first time on CD ***Before the Quarrel***, the original Cro-Mags demo recordings for *The Age of...* +++ **The Camaros** finished up the current leg of the *Dangergirl Across America Tour*. Lead vocalist Jen Jones' report from the road is that it's the "best tour" they've "ever done" and response has been "phenomenal!!" Go to www.thecamaros.com for info on how you can enter the Dangergirl contest. And remember, Dangergirls can come in all shapes & sizes! +++ **Hellacopters** finished up their latest US onslaught. Look for more dates with them in early 2000. Their latest CD, ***Payin' the Dues***, is out now on Sub Pop. In addition to the CD (originally available only via Import on White Jazz), the Sub Pop release contains a bonus CD featuring live tracks recorded over the past summer at the Starfish Room in Vancouver. +++ The **Supersuckers**' new one, ***The Evil Powers of Rock'N'Roll*** is out on KOCH. The band finished up the latest leg of their current US tour and went into the studio in December (12/14) to record a cover of "Heavy Heart" by **You Am I**, for the ***Free The West Memphis 3*** compilation. +++ The **Belmont Playboys**' latest CD, ***One Night of Sin – Live***, is out now on Deep South Recs. Deep South has also reissued the band's 2 previous releases... +++ The **Frantic Flattops** are finishing up another leg of their ongoing U.S. Tour. Their latest CD, ***Rock-N-Roll Murder*** is out now on Get Hip! Recs. +++ The **Amazing Crowns** have confirmed the dates for their annual "Providence Payback" – [Jan. 27, 28, 29] at the Met Cafe. Their performance will be recorded for a forthcoming live CD out on Time Bomb this spring. Their new CD, ***Royal***, will be out this summer on Time Bomb. The band is currently on a full-length US Tour as of press time. And don't miss out on the "Sub Pop Singles Club" release of "Chop Shop / Amateur Night" - available *only* to Singles Club subscribers. +++ Blackout! Recs is celebrating the label's 10 year anniversary by re-releasing titles from **Sheer Terror**, **Outburst**, **Uppercut** and **Breakdown** in early 2000 +++ **Violent Society**'s new one, ***Separation is Killing Us***, is out and they're in the midst of playing some dates with **Kill Your Idols**. Expect new releases from both bands early this year, plus a European tour in this spring. +++ Since **Bright Eyes** released ***Every Day & Every Night*** in November, the band crew has been working on new material. They're currently in the studio working on their upcoming record entitled, ***Fevers & Mirrors***. The album will be released March 27. Expect a full US tour in March in support of the new record. Bad News Recs, a company in Japan, has licensed last year's ***Letting Off the Happiness***. They recently released it in Japan with an extra track entitled "Empty Canyon / Empty Canteen." The band plans to tour Japan in February in support of the release. Bright Eyes also plans on being at the upcoming Saddle Creek showcase at South By Southwest (Austin, TX), coming up in March (Austin, TX). Saddle Creek hopes they'll have Bright Eyes' new record in time for SXSW. +++ As most of you know, **Cursive** is back! Saddle Creek released ***The Storms of Early Summer: Semantics of Song*** last year; it was their second full-length record and the follow-up to Crank! Recs' ***Such Blinding Stars for Starving Eyes***. Around that time, the band broke up, but that didn't last long. Second guitarist Steve Pedersen had already moved to North Carolina to pursue his law school career, so Tim, Matt, and Clint began to look for another guitarist. They asked longtime friend and musician Ted Stevens. Ted is better known for his softer, acoustic style as the lead singer / guitarist for Lullaby for the Working Class. Ted fit the role perfectly. Cursive went into the studio during the first week of January [soon after Bright Eyes finished] to record their 3rd full-length, ***There's Still a Hole Where the Phone Was Thrown***, which will be released concurrently with the new Bright Eyes record March 27. Expect a small Cursive tour in March in support of the new record. Expect to see Cursive at the upcoming Saddle Creek showcase at South By Southwest, coming up in March. Saddle Creek also hopes to have Cursive's new record in time for South By Southwest. SNC Empire, a German label, has pressed *Storms of Early Summer...* on 220-gram vinyl. +++ **The Faint** released ***Blank-wave Arcade***. It's the 2nd full-length from the band, although it has few similarities to their debut ***Media***. The guitars and "indie-rock" have been replaced with keyboards and dance beats. Since before the release of their new record, The Faint has been touring across the US. It looks like they may be releasing a 10" sometime in the next few months, although this is still pretty speculative. +++ **Lullaby For The Working Class** released their 3rd full length *Song* on Nov. 1. The CD came out on Bar/None Recs and the vinyl came out on Saddle Creek. [Both versions are available online at www.saddle-creek.com] The band did an east coast tour last month. Since then, they've been fairly low-key. Ted Stevens (vocals / guitar) has been honing his skills on the electric guitar. He's now playing guitar in Cursive. Mike Mogis (multi-instrumentalist) has been keeping himself busy in the studio recording the upcoming records from Bright Eyes and Cursive. The rest of the band members are working, taking classes, being husbands, etc. +++ New releases from Tone-Cool Recs in 2000 - **Toni Lynn Washington**, **Rick Holmstrom**, **Bernard Allison**, **North Mississippi All Stars**, **Susan Tedeschi** and more. +++ The **Blood Sledge Electric Death Chickens** finished recording their new CD. The title is going to be, ***See, We Ain't Done Jack Shit Since High School***. The CD has 41 tracks and it's over 70 minutes long. They're planning on having it pressed and ready for a mid-February release. For info on a CD release show e-mail them at bsedc@ismi.net. They also have a new zine coming out that will be sent out to everyone on their mailing list. It's basically done; they just have to print it. Expect it sometime in February. +++ New York's E-Magine Entertainment, an internet-centric record label, announced the signing of the techno-industrial rock band **Rorschach Test** to an exclusive recording contract that includes all distribution channels. Composed of vocalist **James Baker**, programmer / keyboardist **Troee**, guitarists **Tracy Moody**, and percussionist **Adrian Ost**, the Seattle-based industrial visionaries mark the label's first signing of 2000. RT is Baker's brainchild, he formed the band after the church defrocked him for heresy. With its mix of industrial, techno and metal, RT's sound can trace its roots back to Ministry and Skinny Puppy, but they offer a more "*unique brand of industrialized hard rock*" that "*spirals down an unexplored path of electronic wizardry and metallic guitars.*" RT's '96 debut effort, *The Eleventh*, revealed the band's electronica grinds, but it was 98's, ***Unclean***, that showcased the band's signature hooks and techno explosions. *Unclean* also featured the single "Sex" which received national attention after generous airplay from commercial rock radio stations across the country. "*Rorschach Test possesses an unparalleled depth that goes beyond the perceived notion of what is considered industrial hard rock,*" says E-Magine co-president Christoph Rücker, "*determined, talented, and highly motivated -- we love them.*" *Unclean* experienced a short shelf life due to its previous label's demise in '98. The strength of the songs, and the album's initial success has prompted E-Magine Entertainment to re-release it. The re-release will recapture RT's momentum and will be released with the band's next full-length album, ***Peace Minus One*** this spring. "*We're very excited to call E-Magine Entertainment home,*" said Baker. "*This deal has proven to us that integrity and vision still exist in this sewer we call the music business, especially with E-Magine's decision and foresight to re-release* Unclean. *We also look forward to releasing or new record,* Peace... *and touring this summer.*" *Unclean* and *Peace...* are available through E-Magine's Web Site www.emaginemusic.com and to retailers through ADA this spring. E-Magine will utilize traditional record outlets for promotion and sales, but will execute an aggressive on-line marketing campaign that will allow the interactive communication between fans, artists and distributors. This will include the digital downloading of free streaming of selected songs as well as selling the album outright through the Internet. +++ Southern Records signed **90-Day Men** to their ranks. This Chicago noisy, heart stopping, mathrock trio will release a new album and a tour sometime this year! +++ Look fer these gems on the Southern Recs: **Bob Tilton** *Leading Hotels of the World* [Feb.]; **The Lapse** *Heaven Ain't Happenin'* [Mar.] **Atombombpocketknife** *Alphasounds* [April]; **Stratford Mercenaries** *Sense of Solitude* [April]; **Sweep the Leg Johnny** *Sto Cazzo!* [May] +++ You can also look for these nuggets due later this year: **The Action Time** *The Comedown Blues* 7" and a full-length from Karate's **Geoff Farina**. Plus, both **Karate** and **Rudimentary Peni** are working on new recordings! +++ **Boycott Radical Records!** 25-song sampler from NYC Punk Ska Oi! Hardcore label: **Agents**, **Blanks 77**, **Booked**, **Cuffs**, **I.C.U.**, **Inspecter 7**, **Road Rage**, **Social Scare**, **Sturgeon General**. Only $5.98 (plus $3.00 postage) or send S.A.S.E. for FREE Boycott Newsletter and Radical Mail Order Catalog: Radical Records 77 Bleecker St. NY, NY 10012 or www.radicalrecords.com +++ **Jimmy & Doug's Farmclub.com** announced the launch of the online record label's weekly television show, "Farmclub.com" [which debuted on January 31] on the USA Network. This show will maximize viewer input by featuring a mix of the newest / hottest music including Farmclub.com artists chosen by viewers at Jimmy & Doug's Farmclub.com website [www.farmclub.com]. The show will be hosted by ex-MTV VJ **Matt Pinfield**. In a related story, Republic / Universal Records teamed with Jimmy & Doug's Farmclub.com to launch the debut release of London recording artist **Sonique** [the first single came out on 12/28/99]. Her full length is set to come out later this month [Feb.]. Jimmy & Doug's Farm Club.com, a subsidiary of Seagram's Universal Music Group, was launched in November and has an array of partners, including America Online, USA Networks, Inc., MTV Networks and Sprite +++ Coming this April from the **Bloodhound Gang**: ***One Fierce Beer*** home video. +++ Epic / Immortal band, **Incubus**, are off and touring again, this time on a national tour sponsored SnoCore and also featuring **System of a Down**, **Mr. Bungle** and **Puya**. Incubus will perform songs from their latest album, ***Make Your Self***, which was released in October, has sold over 200,000 to date; the band's previous Epic / Immortal releases, the 6-song EP ***Enjoy Incubus*** and their 1997 debut album ***S.C.I.E.N.C.E.*** have sold over 250,000 units combined. The band's current line-up is made up of: **Brandon Boyd** [vocals/ percussion], **Mike Einziger** [guitars], **Dirk Lance** [bass], **Jose Pasillas** [drums] and DJ **Chris Kilmore** [turntables]. The tour began on January 15 and will run until February 27. +++

BAND

-- RELEASE DATES* --

FEBRUARY 22

Apoptygma Berzerk Welcome To Earth **[Metropolis]**
Big Muff s/t **[Razor & Tie]**
The Booked Feel the Pride **[Radical]**
Bowery Electric Lushlife **[Beggars Banquet]**
Niko Case & Her Boyfriends Furnace Room Lullaby **[Bloodshot]**
Cleen The Voice **[Metropolis]**
Michael Hutchence s/t **[V2]**
ProPain s/t **[Caroline]**
ProPain Best of ProPain **[Caroline]**
Peter Searcy Could You Please & Thank You **[Time Bomb]**
Sentenced Crimson **[Century Media]**
Submachine Fresh Out of Give-A-F*ck's **[Radical]**
VUE s/t **[Sub Pop]**
V/A Monster 80's **[Razor & Tie]**

FEBRUARY 29

Bloodhound Gang The Bad Touch **[Geffen]**
Covenant United States of Mind **[Metropolis]**
Dismember Hate Campaign **[Caroline]**
Earlimart Filthy Doorways **[Devil in the Woods]**
The Explosion s/t **[Jade Tree]**
Frankie Machine One **[Mammoth]**
Jimmy Dale Gilmore One Endless Night **[Windcharger / Rounder]**
V/A The Next Best Thing **[Maverick]**

MARCH 7

The Blacks Just Like Home **[Bloodshot]**
Noam Chomsky spoken word **[Alternative Tentacles]**
Diary of Dreams One of Eighteen **[Metropolis]**
Cevin Fisher Remixes **[Razor & Tie]**
Sue Fox s/t CD **[Kill Rock Stars]**
Los Infernos Rock-n-Roll Nightmare **[Alternative Tentacles]**
Lois Maffeo & Brendan Canty The Union Themes **[Kill Rock Stars]**
Julius Papp Go Deeper **[Razor & Tie]**
Phantom Surfers XXX Party Album **[Lookout!]**
Rhea's Obsession tba **[Metropolis]**
Strangefolk A Great Long While **[Mammoth]**
Therion Deggial **[Nuclear Blast]**
Howard Zinn spoken word **[Alternative Tentacles]**

MARCH 14

Man Scouts of America Crash Course **[R.A.F.R.]**
Mira s/t **[Projekt]**
V/A Seireenia **[Projekt]**

MARCH 21

Spring Heel Jack Treader **[Thirsty Ear]**

MARCH 28

Bright Eyes Fevers & Mirrors **[Saddle Creek]**
Cursive There's Still a Hole Where the Phone Was Thrown **[Saddle Creek]**
Esham Bootleg [From the Lost Vault] Vol. 1 **[TVT/Overcore]**

APRIL 4

Kevin Ayers Best Of **[Razor & Tie]**
Deftones The White Pony **[Maverick]**
Jeff Greinke Under Ruins / Moving Climate **[Archive]**
The Lucy Nation On **[Maverick]**
P.J. Olsson Words For Living **[C2]**
Rinocerose Installation Sonore **[V2]**
Steve Roach Midnight Moon **[Projekt]**
Shadows Fall Nailwork **[Century Media]**
Chris Spedding Best Of **[Razor & Tie]**

***All of the above dates are tentative.**

-- CONTACTS --

A&M 10900 Wilshire Blvd. Ste. 1230 LACA 90024 -- **Absolutely Kosher** 417 Fredrick St. SFCA 94117 -- **ACME Entertainment** POB 81491 Chicago 60681 -- **Alias** 2815 W. Olive Ave. Burbank CA 91505 -- **All City** 2414 Medill Chicago 60647 -- **Alive / Total Energy** POB 7112 Burbank CA 91510 – **Ambiances Magnetiques** 4580 Avenue de Lorimier Montreal Quebec H2H 2B5 Canada -- **American Pop Project** POB 2271 San Rafael CA 94912 -- **Anisette** POB 741547 LACA 90004 -- **Arista** 6 W. 57th St. NYC 10019 -- **Asphodel** POB 51 Chelsea Station NYC 10113 – **Badoo Toonz Music** POB 190516 Anchorage AK 99519-0516 -- **Bad Stain** POB 35254 Phoenix AZ 85069 – **Bar / None** POB 1704 Hoboken NJ 07030 -- **Beach** 1230 Market St. #135 SFCA 94102 - **Beat Time** POB 445 Zanesville IN 46799 -- **Bedazzled** POB 39195 Washington DC 20016 – **Beggars Banquet** 580 Broadway – Ste. 1004 NYC 10012 -- **Beyond** 9255 Sunset Blvd. 2nd Fl. W. Hollywood CA 90069 – **Big Neck** POB 8144 Reston VA 20195 -- **Blue Marble** POB 08456 Chicago 60608 -- **Bloodshot** 3039 W. Irving Park Rd. Chicago 60618 – **Beyond / BMG Entertainment** 1540 Broadway NYC 10036 – **Brain Surgery Music** 71 W. 23rd St. – Ste. 903 NYC 10010 -- **Burnt Hair** POB 5519 Dearborn MI 48128 -- **BYO** POB 67A64 LACA 90067 -- **Carcrash** POB 39 46221 Vanersborg Sweden -- **Center of the World** 1760 Gross Rd. Dallas TX 75228 -- **Century Media** 1453-A 14th St. #324 Santa Monica CA 90404 -- **Checkered Past** 3940 N. Francisco Chicago 60618 -- **Chipie** 12240 Ventura Blvd - Ste. #103 Studio City CA 91604 -- **Cleopatra** 13428 Maxella Ave. #251 Marina Del Rey CA 90292 -- **CMC International** 5115 Cester Ave. #21 Sherman Oaks CA 91403 -- **Collective Fruit** POB 4415 Seattle WA 98104 – **Columbia** 550 Madison Ave. NYC 10022 -- **Coolidge** 157 Coolidge Terrace, Wyckoff NJ 07481 -- **Craptacular** 504 E. LaSalle St. Colorado Springs CO 80907 -- **Crustacean** POB 37384 Milwaukee WI 53237 -- **Daemon** POB 1207 Decatur GA 30031 -- **Deep Reverb** POB 986 Arlington VA 22216 -- **Devil Doll** POB 30727 Long Beach CA 90853 -- **Doctor Dream** 817 W. Collins Ave. Orange CA 92867 -- **Domo** 2211 Corinth Ave. – Ste. 100 LACA 90064 -- **Drag City** POB 476867 Chicago 60647 -- **Drah No!** 2323 W. Osterhout #4 Kalamazoo MI 49024 – **DreamWorks** 1516 16th Avenue S. Nashville TN 37212 -- **Drool City** 5141 38th Ave. Sacramento CA 95824 -- **Earache** 295 Lafayette St. Ste. 915 NYC 10012 -- **empreintes DIGITALes** 4580 Avenue de Lorimier Montreal Quebec H2H 2B5 Canada -- **Emperor Norton** 102 Robinson St. LACA 90026 – **East Side Digital** 530 N. 3rd St. Ste. 230 Minneapolis MN 55401 -- **Esque** 1870 York Ave. Memphis TN 38104 -- **Estrus** POB 2125 Bellingham WA 98227 -- **Evil Eye** POB 640264 SFCA 94164 -- **Evil Teen** POB 651 Village Station NYC 10014 – **F-111** 75 Rockefeller Plaza 20th Fl. NYC 10019 -- **Farren Music America** 1606 Blossom Lane Redondo Beach CA 90278 -- **Fastmusic** 368 Broadway #511 NYC 10013 -- **Fifth Column** 4154 N. Irish Rd. Davison MI 48423 -- **File 13** POB 2302 Philadelphia PA 19103 – **Flipside** POB 60790 Pasadena CA 91116 -- **Frenetic** POB 640434 SFCA 94164-0434 -- **Skidd Freeman** POB 4281 E. Lansing, MI 48826 -- **G-7 Welcoming Committee** POB 3 905 Corydon Ave. Winnipeg MB R3M-3S3 Canada -- **Get Hip** POB 666 Cannonsburg PA 15317 -- **Ginger** POB 06505 Chicago 60606 – **GMM** POB 15234 Atlanta GA 30333 -- **Go Kart** POB 20 Prince Station NYC 10012 – **Guilt Ridden Pop** 2217 Nicollet Ave. S. Minneapolis MN 55404 – **Guilty Bystanders** 2072 Mackinaw Davison MI 48423 -- **Hands On** 6255 Sunset Blvd. Ste. 705 LACA 90028 -- **Harmless** 1437 W. Hood Street Chicago 60660 -- **Hopeless / Sub City** POB 7495 Van Nuys CA 91409 -- **Idol** POB 720043 Dallas TX 75372 -- **Incidental** POB 421152 Minneapolis MN 55442 – **Invisible** POB 16008 Chicago 60616 -- **Jet Set** 67 Vestry St. NYC 10013 – **Island / Def Jam** 825 8th Ave. Worldwide Plaza NYC 10019 -- **Johann's Face** POB 479164 Chicago 60647 -- **Johnny Bravo** POB 7412 Huntington Beach CA 92615 -- **Kill Rock Stars** PMB 418 120 NE State Ave. Olympia WA 98501 – **Koch** 740 Broadway NYC 10003 -- **Kranky** POB 578743 Chicago 60657 -- **Lance Rock** 1223 College Drive Nanaimo BC V9R 5Z5 Canada -- **Little Pork Chop** POB 20637 NYC 10009 -- **Lookout!** POB 11374 Berkeley CA 94712 -- **Magic Marker** POB 9342 Portland OR 97207 -- **Makota** POB 50403 Kalamazoo MI 49005 -- **Mammoth** 99 Hudson St. – 8th Fl. NYC 10013 – **Man's Ruin** 610 22nd St. #302 SFCA 94107 -- **March** 51 Main Hastings On Hudson NY 10706 -- **Martyr Music Group** POB 45 Natick MA 01760 -- **Medea** POB 99055 Troy MI 48099 -- **Melted** 21-41 34th Ave. Ste. 10-A Astoria NY 11106 -- **Metal Blade** 2345 Erringer Rd. 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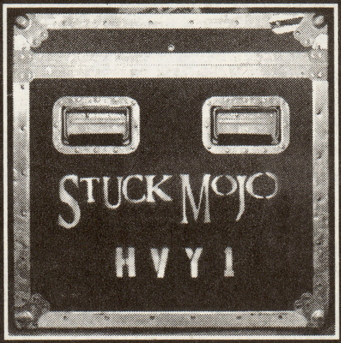
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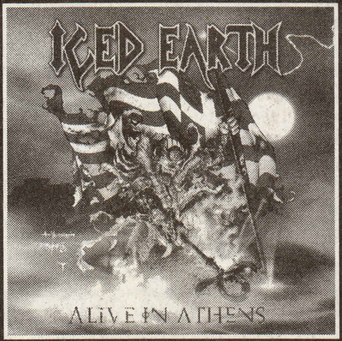
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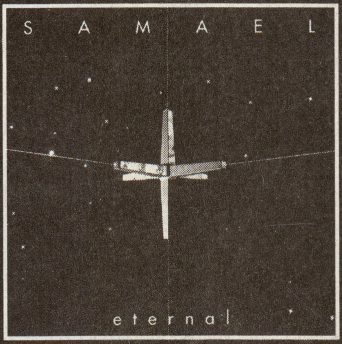
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